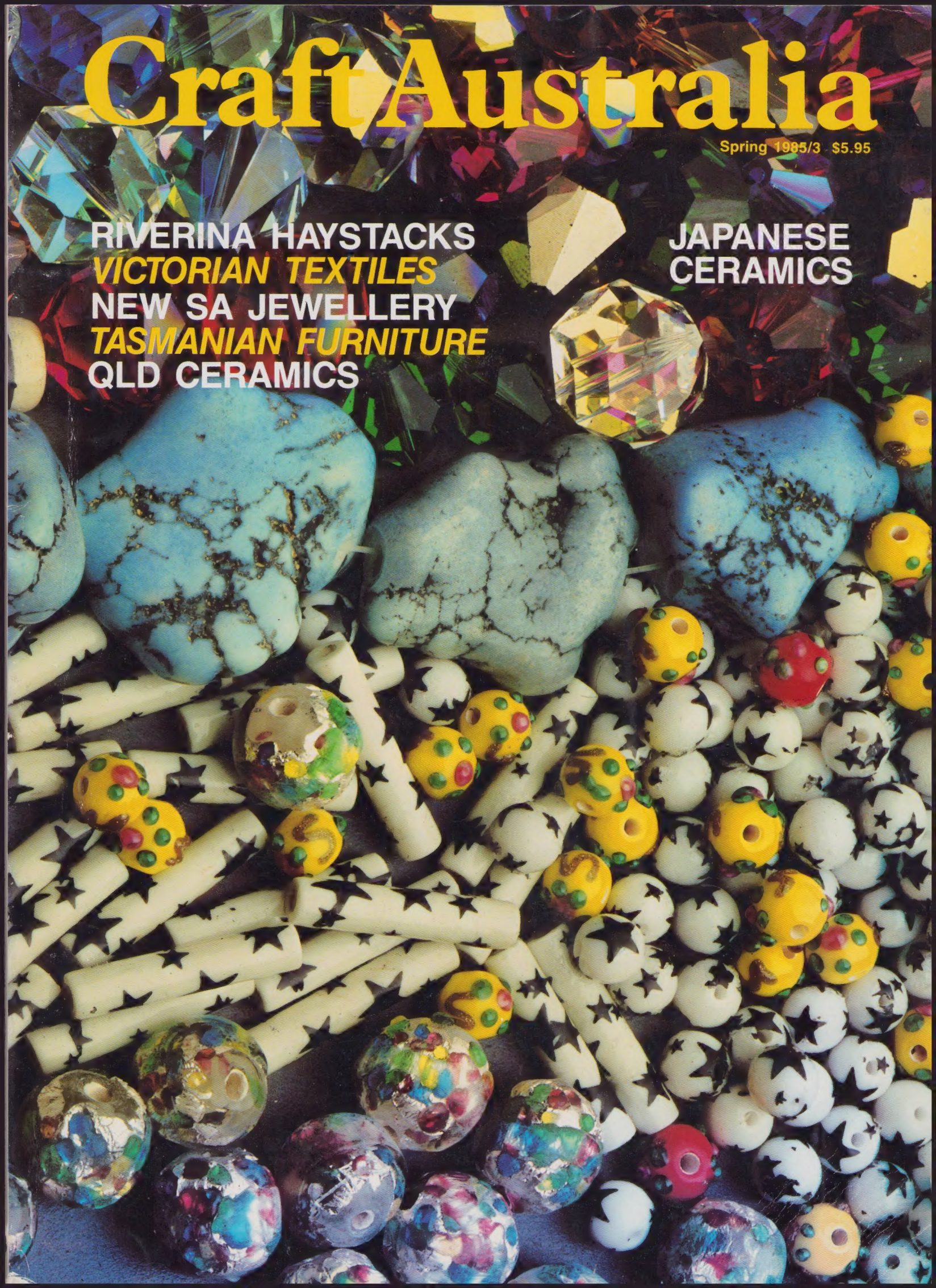


Craft Australia

The background of the cover is a dense, colorful collage of various craft materials. At the top, there are several large, faceted, multi-colored crystals in shades of blue, green, and purple. Below these, there are large, irregular turquoise stones with dark, veined patterns. Interspersed among these are numerous small beads and pendants. Some beads are white with black star patterns, while others are yellow with colorful polka dots. There are also larger, multi-colored beads with intricate patterns. The overall composition is rich and textured, showcasing a variety of craft techniques and materials.

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Craft Australia

Spring 1985/3

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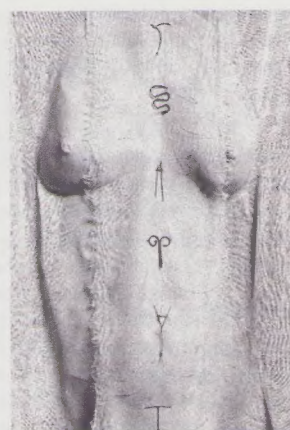
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Cover: Beads from The Bead Company. Photo Adrian Hall.

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Save the gumnut!

The consistent attacks by critics on native floral imagery in Australian crafts is a strange phenomena. It is suggested that the current boom in gumtree and bush motifs is a form of design decadence. This is a curious comment on the Australian cultural scene.

Imagine a country rebelling against its own flora; a national allergic reaction to wattle and gumtrees. Contemplate French critics assaulting the artists of France for being too French. Try to think of British writers wailing about too many misty moors and Autumn-tinted oaks.

In other nations, critics see cultural decadence in the creeping infiltration of foreign influences. Witness the bizarre adjective 'un-American'. Fantasize about something attacked as un-Australian.

Some of our critics see cultural decadence when Australian artists choose to ignore international developments. We are too Australian. Provincial. Insular.

Decadence suggests decline. Surely the creative use of the flora growing in one's own garden does not qualify? One cannot fault native flora any more than potters can blame their clay.

Our Next Issue

The Summer issue will look at some exciting Aboriginal baskets rarely seen before, ceramics and glass from some of our young Australian artists, an important feature on politics and contemporary craft and much more. Please renew early to avoid missing this issue. Readers should also note the 1985 Yearbook is going to be in short supply. Keep the cards and letters coming.

Michael Bogle

An apology to our winter issue readers, writer Garry Benson and artist Alvena Hall for the technical botch on p.51. If anyone would like a legible copy of this article, please write to the editor.

LETTERS

Readers may telephone letters of 50 words or less between 10:00-4:00, Monday through Friday. Call (02) 241-1701.

Please keep your letters short so we can publish as many as possible. Some letters may be edited for length.

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my appreciation of the article about Early Australian Floor Coverings by Susan Hunt included in your Autumn Issue.

It is rare that such an informed and interesting article appears on such a basic but grossly overlooked subject as handmade floor coverings.

Towards the end of the article mention was made of the North American rag rug and it was commented that the author had little information about its practise in Australia. I am pleased to be able to inform you that the American method of rug hooking is practised by several dedicated groups in this country, although the total number of devotees is not large.

The largest group of rug-hookers in Australia is centred in the Elizabeth/Salisbury area of South Australia. They will be mounting an exhibition of about 30 rugs at the Salisbury Council Gallery from 5th to 31st July, 1985. Exhibited will be examples of traditional American and Canadian designs as well as some local designs by group members. All facets of rug hooking will be exhibited, this includes wall hangings, cushion and stool covers.

**Mrs Faye Godfrey,
Elizabeth, SA.**

To the Editor:

Your Art/Craft discussion in the Autumn '85 issue left us with a cliff hanger. Donald Brook came up with the craft being part of art which is diplomatic but hardly earth-shattering. It's hard to be earth-shattering with words anymore, even in paint it's difficult.

He seemed to leave me with the old chestnut of what is art, what is art/craft and what is craft?

I still think you can arrive at some insight into this matter by asking another question. Why do we continue to 'make things' for no real reason? What is the driving force that moves people to express themselves in other languages foreign to their normal everyday means of communication? Why on earth do we do it?

Firstly, of course, on the surface is the commercial reason, in our world we can make a living from it, comfortable for some, moderate for others and poorly for some.

Early men and women painted images on caves. I have read many reasons why they did this. Maybe some were commercial but mostly not. Why all this imagery on houses, canoes, knives, spears, pots, posts and all the objects of their environment including their bodies? Much of it was spiritual but not always.

I assume the majority of your readers are folk who 'make things' and they will understand clearly that when you run a loaded brush of colour across a white sheet of paper or any other similar action of no really worldly consequence, you will know the totally wonderful feeling of elation and excitement that comes with this action. It is a unique uplifting motivating experience, almost obscene in its sensuality.

The individual power and wonderment it can bring to you, to you, only you, because you are the giver and the receiver all in one, nobody else.

It is this indescribable feeling of personal pleasure, power and wonderment from your own hand and mind that drives us all to 'paint or make things'.

It is fun, *but personal*, it is your own, that *no one*, no one can stop, it is all you and your personality that has been shaped by your life's experiences.

It is the one 'make thing' in this world that is you and yours, it is a sublime, untouchable, exciting escape, whether it is art or craft doesn't really matter because it is *freedom*, personal *freedom*.

That's what it's all about.

**Brian R Langevad,
Winston Hills, NSW.**

To the Editor:

Craft Australia has got to be one of the two or three best arts publications in the world. It is not only interesting and handsome, but also thought-provoking.

May we have your piece on 'Sowing Confusion in the Useful Arts' which appeared on pages 90 and 91 in the Summer issue? We will, of course, give credit to the source.

I also found your editorial comments most interesting. Not only is poverty a sexually transmitted disease, but the whole notion that crafts are somehow inferior to 'fine art' extends from that same disease, namely that most of what we call crafts has traditionally been done by women, most art historians and critics have traditionally been men, hence how can it be art if it was done by women?

Congratulations on an absolutely super job.

**Michael Scott
Editor
The Crafts Report, USA**

To the Editor:

I read your article today about Ernabella Batiks, (Summer 1984) and realised that you may not be aware of my teaching at Ernabella and Amata, during the period 1975-1976. My name was not mentioned in the article so I decided to write this letter.

I met Leo Brereton in Yogyakarta in 1972, where we worked in the same batik school, and he told me of his work in Australia. At this point I was unaware that I might have a future in the batik field. Leo had taught the use of Dylon dyes, readymade wax, without the use of recipes. At the time of my arrival at Ernabella, the women were mainly using brushes and painting on the wax.

I brought along with me the best Indonesian tjantings, naphthol and indigosol dyes, various waxes for different types of wax-making, cotton, silk and brushes, 'el-frypans', measure-spoons and plastic buckets.

Whilst I was at Ernabella I strongly encouraged the use of tjantings, which the women took to well. I also trained them in wax-making in both firm unbreakable and breakable wax and left recipes behind me. I also taught the use of naphthols, and indigosol

dyes, using a simple method of measuring with spoons. After being there two months the women seemed very confident. During this time I also gave one week workshops to women from Fregon and later Indulkana. Besides teaching Batik I also taught dress-making, including measuring, cutting and sewing.

This project was funded by an Aboriginal Arts Board grant.

Later on I received another grant to teach further west, where batik had never been introduced at all. I was given a grant for three months, but stayed eight months due to a feeling of responsibility for the Aboriginal's future in the modern civilisation surrounding them.

At that time I never thought to reapply for more grants. During my stay at Amata people would come from Wingalina and Pyplajara to do workshops along with various women from Amata.

I am very pleased to see that batik is being practised by the Aboriginal people and to know that Winifred is still there. I wish the Aboriginal people every success with their artistic activities.

My husband Malcolm and I have two children now, a boy and a girl. We are happy and live quietly in the Blue Mountains. However, we will never forget our time in the north-west reserve.

**Vivian McClintock
Leura, NSW**

To the Editor:

First of all, I want to tell you how much I enjoyed my visit to your marvellous country. In the few weeks that I was there it was impossible to see everything, but because of the generosity and kindness of so many people it is certainly a place that I would like to come back to in order to know it better.

The fact that my trip started with the First National Conference of Craft Bookbinders was very useful to me for the rest of my stay. During those three days, I met a lot of people. These first contacts enabled me to visit graphic artists, bookbinders, schools and libraries later on during my trips to Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

The Conference itself I think was a great success. It was well organised, offering an

interesting programme shared by many Australian lecturers and demonstrators. It is evident that such events are extremely important in order to enlarge one's own horizon by exchanging ideas.

A question arose during the final session of the Conference: the need to establish a Bookbinding School in Australia, and if yes, the necessity of a teacher from abroad. If you will permit, I would answer yes for a school, but no for one permanent foreign instructor. If it is in the financial possibilities of the Craft Council to support the costs of an overseas binder, these visits can always be of interest and help to any Australian bookbinder, but I feel there are already some qualified people in Australia who could well handle the job. Of course it is important to learn as much as possible from foreigners, but in order to keep the originality and freshness of yours, you must overcome the difficulties and obstacles in your own way rather than follow any European School.

In closing off, I just want to insist on the fact that I am at the disposal, along with Jean-Paul and Monique Delamotte (of the Association *Culturelle France-Australie*) to help any colleagues who come to Europe; and once again, I hope I will be able to return one day to your lovely country where life seems so exciting and full of possibilities.

Sün Evard
La celle les bordes
78720 Dampierre
France

To the Editor:

Recently, an article of mine was published in two American magazines, **Women's Household** and **Women's Circle**.

My name and address were published — since then, I have received over 600 letters from American and Canadian women. They are arriving on an average of 15/20 per day, and, as the edition of **Women's Household** was only released about 2 weeks ago, I am beginning to wonder just how many more are on their way!

All letters are the same in that they want to write to Australian women, they are all very interested in the Australian family, Australian culture, and the Australian

way of life. Many of them mentioned how difficult it was to contact a penfriend organisation in Australia who would be able to supply them with names and addresses.

Obviously, I cannot answer such a number of letters myself. However, I am prepared to pass on the names and addresses to Australian women who may want to write.

All I need is a stamped, self-addressed envelope, plus approximate age and general interests of the writer. I shall then match the letters to someone who has similar interests and forward the information on.

However, I must stress that I can only send on names and addresses of what comes to me, there are very few letters from men, and I do not wish any of your readers to think that I can obtain penfriends of the opposite sex for them. As I have said most are from married women in the 30-45 age group, and they wish to write to married Australian women of the same age and interests.

Many of the writers have asked to write to people in rural and country areas; others have asked specifically to write to someone on a farm or station. Others just want to write to 'someone anywhere in Australia'.

Letters should be forwarded to my postal address:

Mrs Carolyn Ribone,
P.O. Box 185,
Red Hill, 4059.

To the Editor:

I received your letter reminding me of the Education Supplement for the Autumn 1985 edition of *Craft Australia*.

The School of Art and Design at WAIT cannot afford to participate in the Education Supplement for 1985. We are in a deficit situation and the School Board, to whom I applied for funding for the supplement, regretfully refused my request. We have been well represented in the supplement in the past and I know students here look upon being represented as a privilege and mark of distinction. They will be very disappointed at losing the opportunity to participate.

I receive many enquiries from potential interstate applicants for the craft courses at WAIT

as a direct result of our representation in the supplement. In addition it is a good forum for academics to keep an eye on what is going on across Australia.

Finally, despite severe financial constraints on our courses this year there is a superb body of work emerging at the moment as students prepare for their degree exhibition in December.

This is symptomatic of the overall situation for the visual arts in this State and in this Institution for the past few years. The forecast for the future is very bleak with the 'Arts' at WAIT facing more cuts each year of the coming triennium.

It may be a long time before we can make a contribution towards the Education Supplement in *Craft Australia*. In the meantime I wish the project well. Australia needs and deserves to view the emerging talent from its craft courses.

David Walker
Head of Crafts
School of Art and Design
Western Australian Institute
of Technology
Bentley, W.A.

To the Editor:

I'm writing on behalf of the interests of artworkers, prompted by a recent experience with **Craft Australia**.

I was pleased to be asked to write a short segment to be included in an article about enamellers in Australia and then a book review for the magazine. I was not altogether surprised to discover there was no payment for the first but was, when told there was no payment for book reviews.

The decision was mine whether to write the review or not under those conditions. I agreed to do it and that's fine. I want to make it clear that I want no remuneration for that review.

However I did become concerned that in fact that was the policy of **Craft Australia**. It would not be in keeping with my own experience in earning a living as a professional artist, nor with the objectives I espouse through membership of organisations like the Crafts Council, The Artworkers Union and the National Association for the Visual Arts, if I was not to wish to see that policy changed.

I recognise that we all operate under financial constraints, at the same time desiring results and quality, the means towards which usually far outreach resources for proper remuneration.

I believe however that we cannot continue to use this as a reason for perpetuating situations which exploit the good will and knowledge of artworkers, or expect them to always be willing to subsidise the arts or maintain the attitude that it is right and reasonable for artworkers not to be paid fairly for work done. It's often an honour to be asked but we've been offered honours in lieu of payment for a long time now.

Every effort needs to be made not only to establish equitable situations but also to change the attitudes which say it is unreasonable to ask for things to be different.

It's not surprising that people are willing to write reviews without payment, it's in line with the long tradition of little or no remuneration for services rendered. Artists are constantly asked to speak, lecture, contribute to radio and television programmes, exhibit, give advice etc. for small fees or none. Very few can name their price and get it. The situation might be reasonable only for those with more than adequate income.

You and the Council know all this, I'm sure, and these days we can also hold up for reference 'The Report of the Committee of the Individual Artists Inquiry' headed by David Throsby for the Australia Council.

The Arts industry in Australia is growing, we've created so far a situation in which it is those in the para-professions who have the most secure income and benefits and not the artists themselves. That is not the fair and equitable circumstance I'm sure we all want.

So, I'm bringing the matter to your attention with the desire that it will spur on attempts to ensure that artworkers are adequately and fairly paid for work requested, and for reasonable expenses outlaid in the course of that work.

Vivienne Binns
Cremorne, NSW

Craft Australia has always given the book to reviewers as payment. This policy is being studied.



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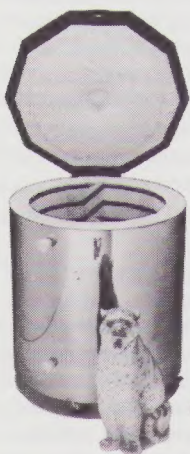
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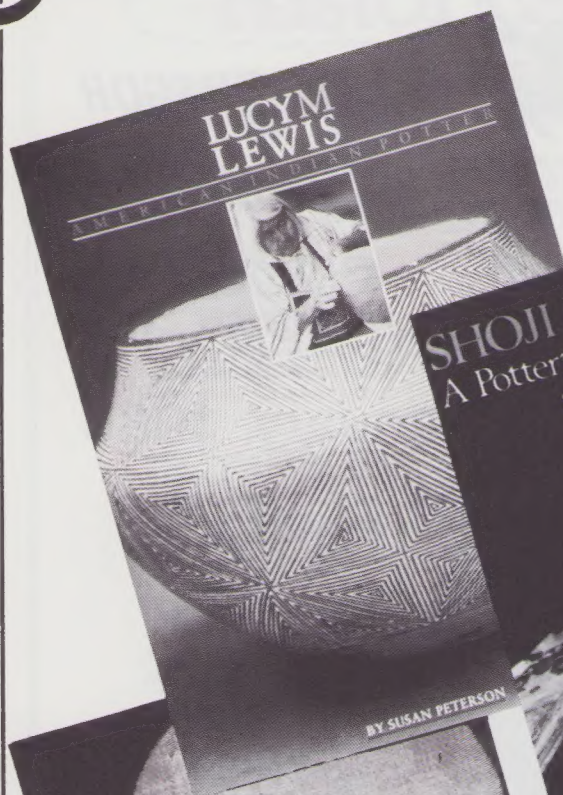
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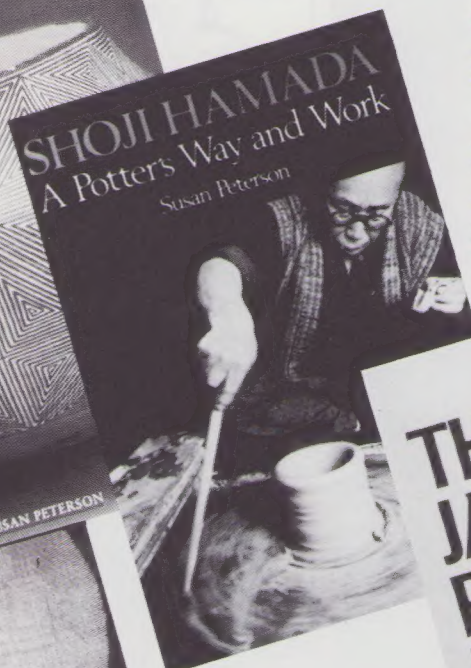


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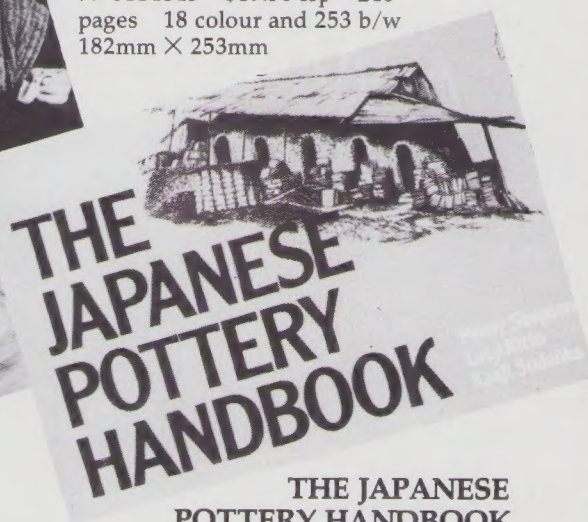


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Eligible work may be features on individual craftspeople, critical reviews of craft works or craft books, general features on craft philosophy, general survey articles on the crafts in Australia.

Previous Award Recipients have been senior journalists and academics whose writings have significantly raised awareness of the crafts and awareness of Australian craftspeople.

A judging panel headed by the Founding Director of Ascrafft, Joyce Burnard, the instigator of the Award, will make its decision in late November 1985 having read as widely as possible with reference to sources notified to the Crafts Council of Australia or the State Crafts Councils by Editors and/or prospective recipients.

Joyce Burnard is a writer. The other judges are a representative of the Crafts Council of Australia, the Editor of Craft Australia, a senior journalist.

Jane Burns,
Crafts Council of Australia,
100 George Street,
Sydney. Ph. (02) 241 1701
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A tour of the wood firing kilns of the Lao, Khmer, Thai and Chinese in Thailand is being organised for November 11th 1985. In the two weeks, Trisha Cheesman who has spent over eight years in the area, will share her knowledge of the ancient techniques and discuss the history and origins of the present-day potteries with visits to the North-East, Lanna, and central Thai sites. For students, potters and antique collectors alike this trip will be an eye-opener. The tour leaves Sydney and Melbourne on November 11th to 25th. The price \$1,840.00 [\$175.00 single supplement] includes airfare, hotels and breakfasts.

Please contact Paul Cummings at Orbit Tours, Ground floor of MLC building, Castlereagh St, Sydney. Tel [02] 233 3288. Melbourne office: 183 Elizabeth St. Tel [03] 67 7071. Trisha will be back in Australia by July 27th and will be glad to answer enquiries at [02] 992 553. It is advised to book ahead to avoid disappointment.



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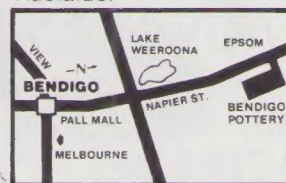
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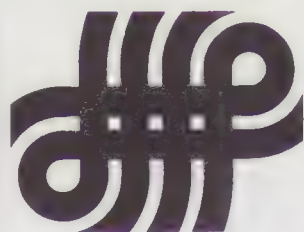
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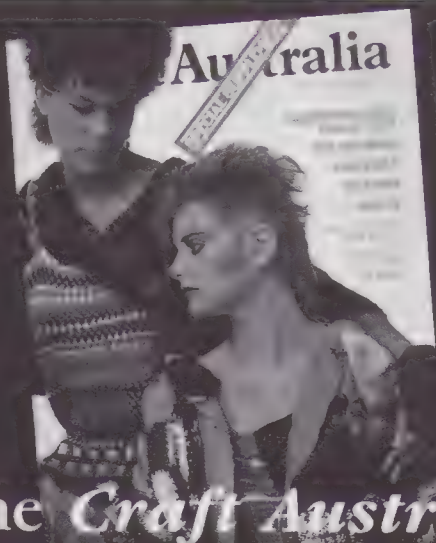
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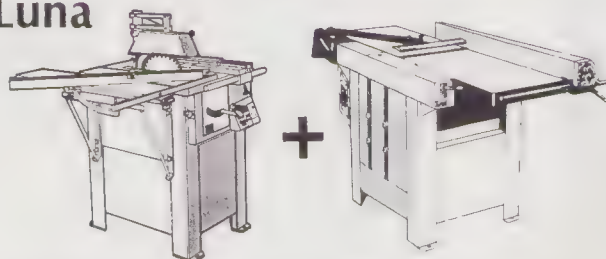
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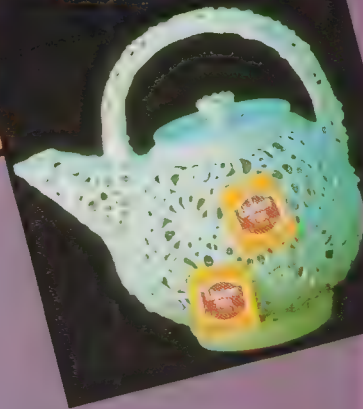
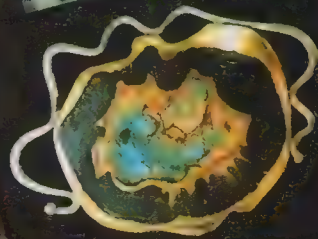
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New Work from Warren Langley

Roger Nachman

Last year, Australian glass artist Warren Langley worked at the California College of Arts and Crafts for six months after an invitation to work as visiting artist in the glass programme headed by Marvin Lipofsky. The invitation from CCAC was subsequently supported by a grant from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council.

The period at CCAC forms part of an extended 12 months overseas work period for Langley. During this time he was also invited to become a teaching assistant to Paul Marioni at the internationally accredited Pilchuck Glass Centre. More recently he has been engaged by the British Council to undertake a short lecture tour of the UK to speak specifically on the experimental programme of work he has undertaken in the USA.

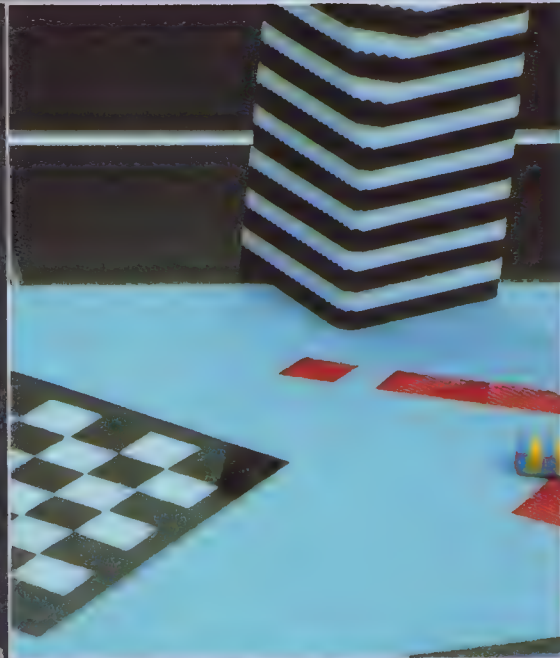
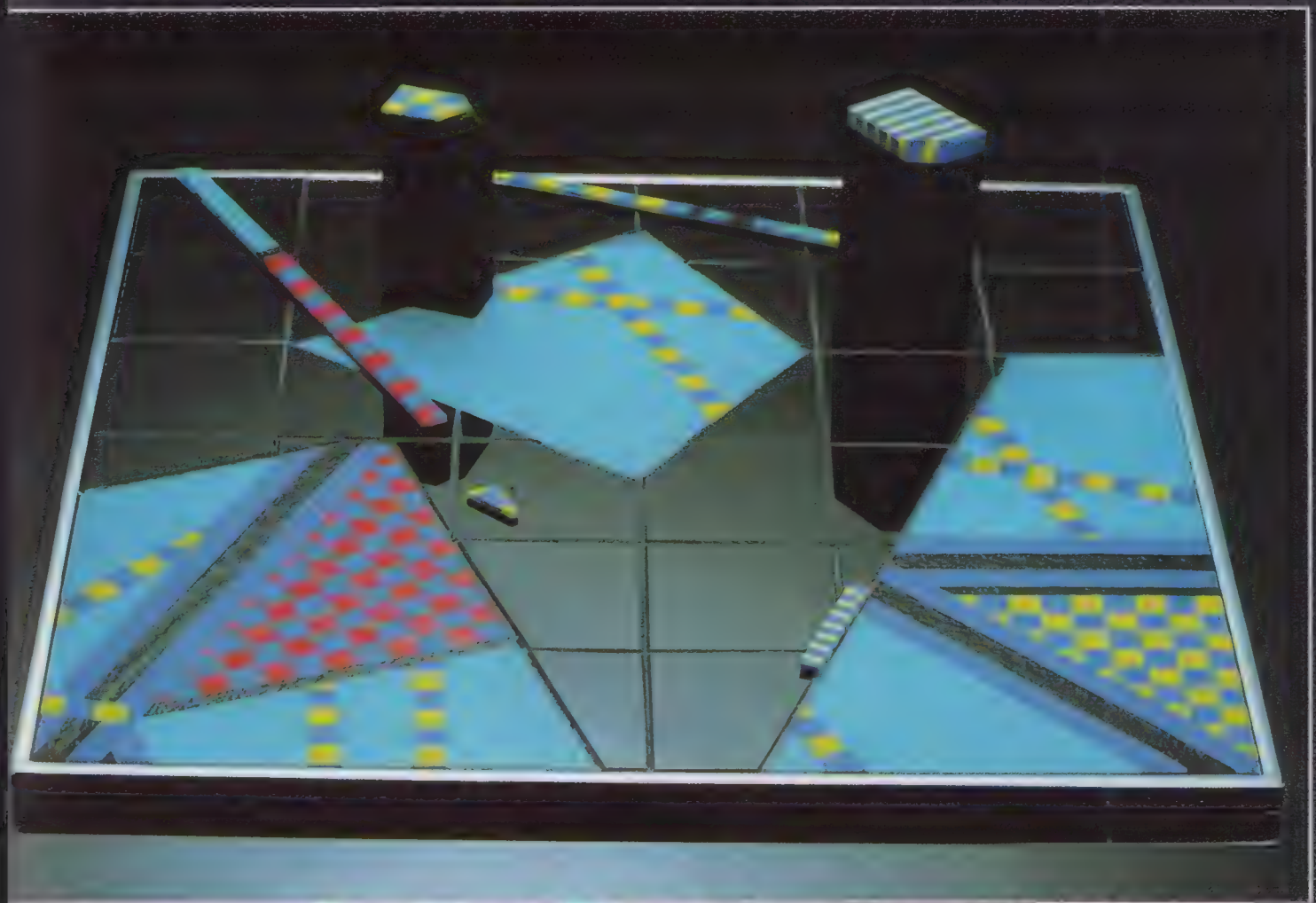
Langley's daunting work load suffered a major setback in August when his entire body of work from his first three months was stolen in Seattle, Washington the day after its completion. 'It was just a matter of energy', he recalls, 'I felt exhausted when I confronted the fact that despite the vast amount of energy which had been spent, I was left with nothing I could touch'.

The enormity of this disaster failed to take its toll and Langley launched into what was to become his major body of work for the 12 month period. As this time drew to an end, Langley paused to reflect on the importance of this extended overseas work period, surrounded by his finished works. 'There have been a number of obvious and predictable outcomes,

particularly from a technical perspective. The period allowed for an extensive experimental programme to be undertaken, giving rise among other things, to what I call my fuse-cast process for fusing glass in a three-dimensional format without any unwanted deformation of the form'.

More importantly though Langley thinks that the period was far more valuable for the impact it had on his own personal development and he sees this period as one that allowed a greater intellectual base for his work to be nurtured. 'Having long ago answered the old desert island question in the affirmative, that is, yes, I would continue to make my art even if alone on a desert island, I saw a whole new question. If you were alone on a desert island, how would it change your art? This and other philosophical vagaries caused me to look at what I was doing with new eyes. Was it good art or bad art? The realisation that what you are making may not necessarily constitute good art, is both a humbling and devastating realisation, a wonderful cleansing process.'

The confrontation with this dilemma has given rise to some of Langley's strongest works to date. The *Games Series* attest to this. They are a technically sophisticated series of sculptural works based on a game format. Discussing this series of work, Langley says, 'my work has always been thematic in the sense that it has provided a means of expression for my comments, my passions, my anxieties and my despair. For those of us who otherwise lack the confidence to articulate these emotions, the work provides a perfect vehicle to do so. This current series of work is no different, albeit a far more graphic and obscure treatment of theme than has been common in my past works. The games of this series are non-playable despite the fact that they usually contain some obscure visual puzzle, they deal with subjects which I find paradoxical in modern society. They are about issues which concern me'.



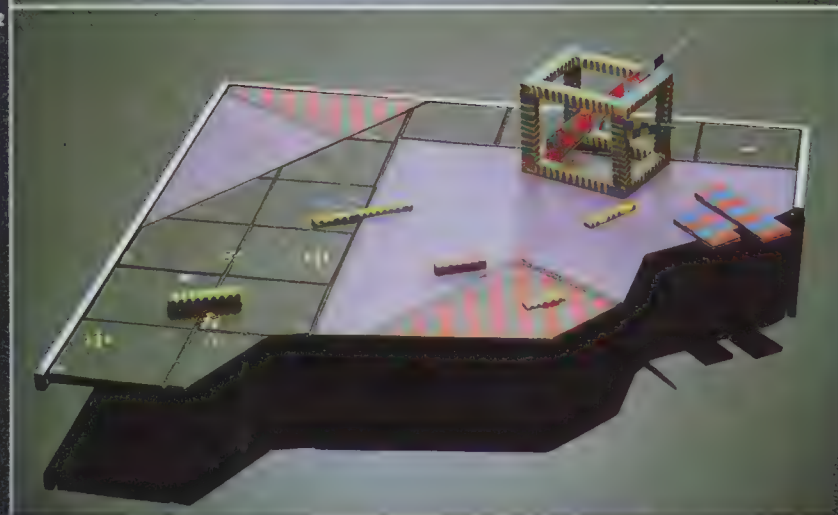
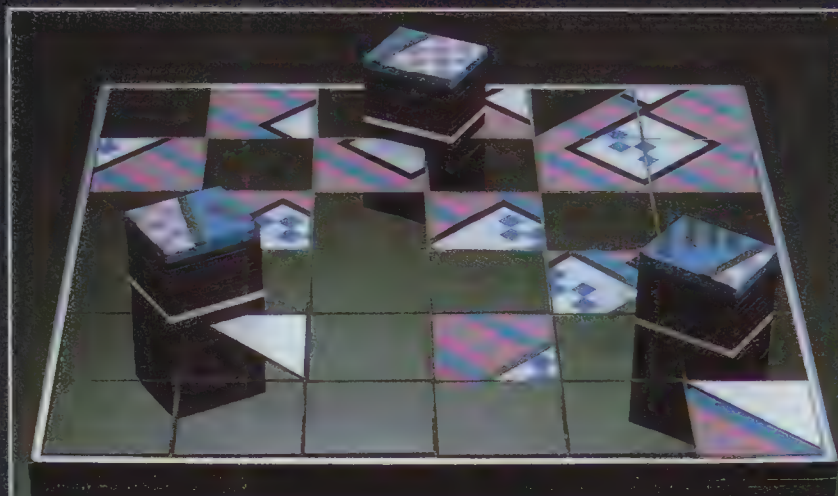
1. *Ground Zero Game*. Fused glass. 620 x 620. 1984.
2. *The 4th St Game*. Fused glass. 620 x 620. 1984.
3. *Ground Zero Game* detail.
4. *The 4th St Game* detail.

On his decision to work within the confines of this games theme, Langley says that 'it has been part of a deliberate intellectual exercise in the mutation of an idea. The works within this series have mutated dramatically in response to the US experience, so that even the inexperienced eye should be able to look at this body of work and arrange them in their chronological order of execution'. He sees the development within this series as a direct result of his own personal confrontation with his work along with the valuable critiques provided by programme head Marvin Lipofsky and the continual exchange with other Bay Area artists, most notably Robert Herhusky and Bruce Smith who generously shared their studio space. 'I believe that the opportunity to spend an

extended work period with and around other equally dedicated glass workers was perhaps the most valuable aspect of this whole project'.

In viewing the Australian glass arts in the perspective of the international studio glass movement, Langley makes an interesting observation. 'I think that if we are to live up to this title of *glass artist*, with which we have been dubbed, we must now seek that artistic credibility. I do not see this happening until such time as the makers achieve some level of intellectual credibility. The pretty slides in the catalogue are not enough. A dialogue must be established with the maker. It is time to talk about the 'why' of the making'.

Photos Monica Lee.



1. *The Network Game*. Fused glass. 620 x 620. 1984.
2. *The Snakes and Leaders Game*. Fused glass. 620 x 620. 1985.
3. *The Berkeley Game*. Fused glass. 620 x 620. 1984.



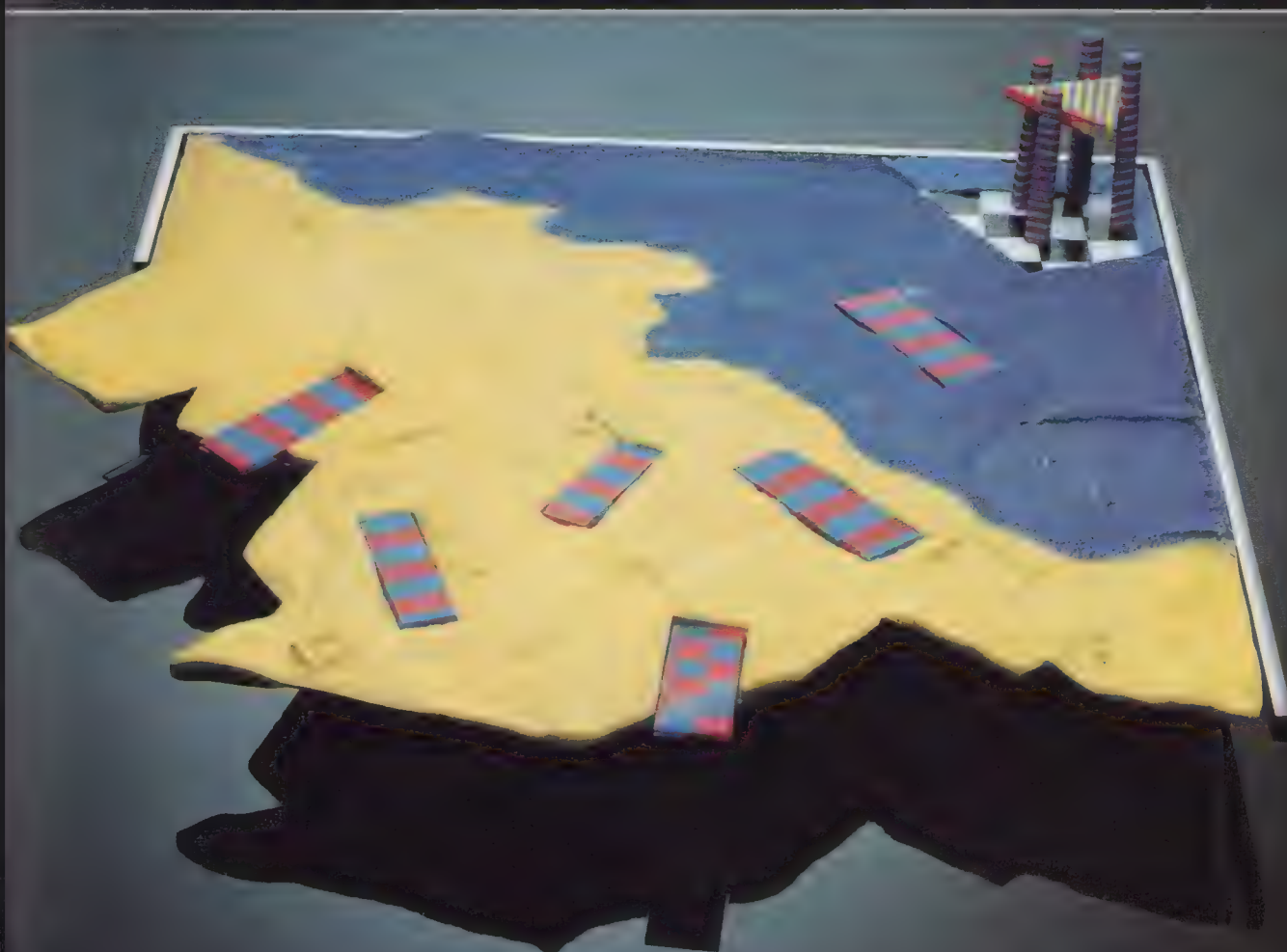




1. *A Complex Game about Quantum Physics, Zen, Mysticism and Pure Chance.* Fused glass. 620 x 620. 1985.
2. *Neanderthal Gaming Table.* Fuse-cast glass. 400mm L. 1985.



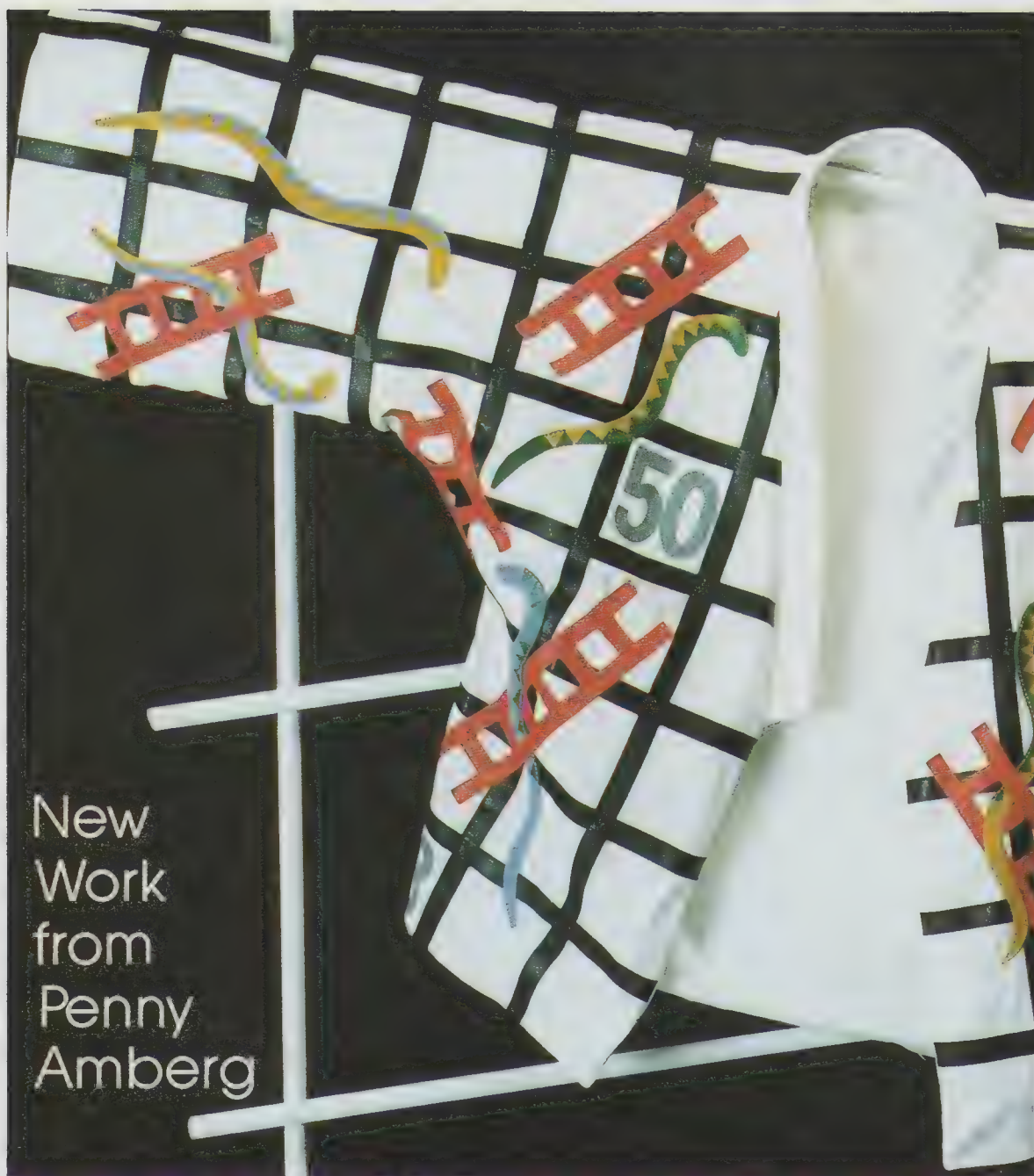
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3. *Neanderthal
Gaming Table.*
Fuse-cast glass.
300mm L. 1984.

4. *The Incursion
Game.* Fused
glass. 620 x 620.
1985.





New Work from Penny Amberg

Nola Anderson

My response to Penny Amberg's work of the last four years has been optimistic curiosity. It is based on her work exhibited in group shows between 1981-4 and discussions with the artist about her current project.

The optimism is as much a response to Amberg the artist as to the work in question. A shaky critical stance perhaps, but an acknowledgement that while criticism must be based on the object, optimism is the luxury of intuition about its maker.

'Those pieces were immediate responses to what was going on at the time, it was quick, spontaneous. Those pieces were almost totally experimental ideas.'

Since coming to Canberra in 1981 to establish the Canberra School of Art's leather workshop, Penny Amberg has thrown out some tantalising clues about leather. She has also thrown out some tantalising clues about Amberg. My optimism grew on the mix.

It is not easy to identify a uniform ground plan for the work produced between 1981-4. The distances between the witticisms of *Body Baggage* and *Function?!* and the more formal concerns of the 1983 brooch series and the construction *Transfigured Planes*



left one hardly enough room to guess on, let alone develop a resolved critical stance. But together they presented a picture of Amberg the explorer and the quest became as significant as its milestones.

Now, in January 1985, working towards a Perth show, Amberg literally outlines the rules of the game.

'I'm thinking of three-dimensional noughts-and-crosses games, playing with politics. Looking at social relationships like marriage, at male/female, at gays. Drawing it up as board games.'

'Trying to work out what a game is. Find the essence. Find that model. Find the rules of the game. Place that in the work.'



For Amberg, the task is to create the objects that will articulate the ideas. And again that is reason for optimism. Some of the best contemporary craft of the last few decades has not been the artist's first thoughts. First came the idea, then came the object, sometimes reluctantly, with great effort, certainly with some sense of risk, always with conviction.

The creative condition has not been, and is not always like that, but I think it is a reasonable response to the western Twentieth Century emphasis on expressionism and the individual. Certainly Amberg finds it necessary to move formal and technical investigations into the social and political arena.



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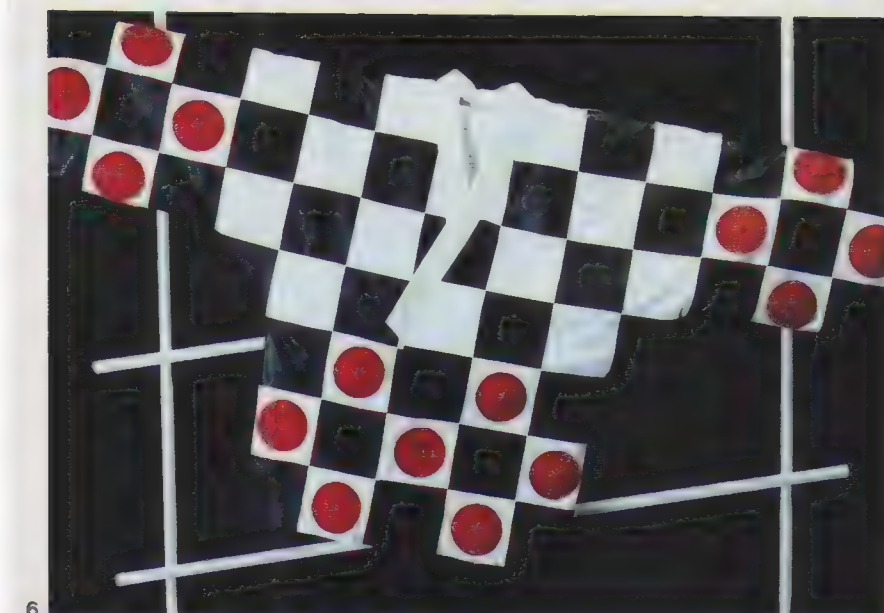


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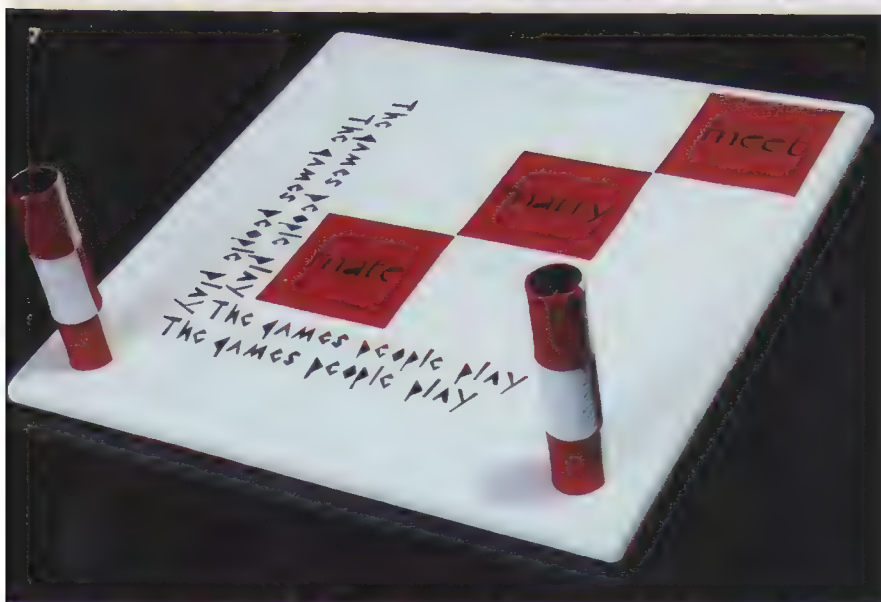
'I was playing around with ideas. That was beginning to happen. It's a new game. Snakes and Ladders. You go up a ladder. You get a divorce, you go down a snake.'

Amberg's game is translated into leather. It is still only rarely that media with roots firmly embedded in the crafts are used to explore social and political issues. Rarely, that is, in comparison to those instances where formalist or functional issues are paramount. Is it an irony that formalist and functional aspirations can be an intrinsic part of a more conceptual approach? While Amberg is playing with three-dimensional games, she is also creating her *Checkers* kimono

1. 2. *Life Jacket*.
Size 12-14. 1985.
3. *Function?! Bags*. 20
x 8 x 25 cm. 1983.
4. 5. *Trinity*. 1.8 x 2 x 2
m. 1985.



6



6. *Checkers*. Jacket front. Size 12-14 1985.

7. *Marriage*. 2 x 3 x 3 m. 1985.

8. *Transfigured Planes II*. .8 x .2 x .2 cm. 1983.

whose witticisms are due, in part, to its audacity to be functional.

Wit has always played a part in Amberg's work, even in the formalist brooch series whose pun lies in the progressive distortion of horizontal lines. Wit is a risky game though, as Amberg acknowledges. To date in Amberg's work it has made the viewer an accomplice and left the work intact.

I suspect that if craft mediums were as unseductive as a dab of acrylic paint before it follows the artist's brush, more would be done for the sake of idea than medium. Amberg is fascinated by her medium but is interested in using it to say a lot of other things.

Nola Anderson is a well-known crafts writer and critic.

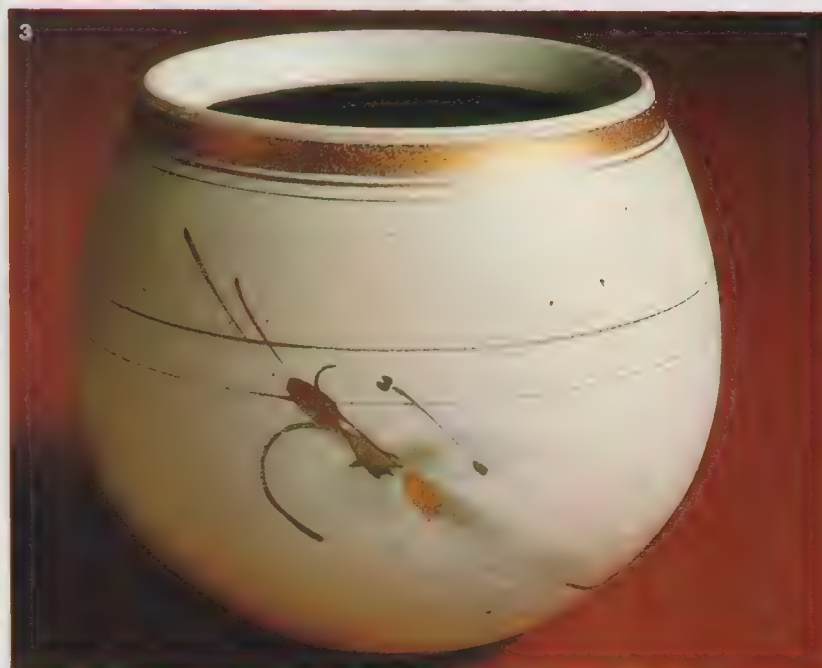
All photos David Reid



8



Vic Greenaway



New Directions

Meredith Hinchliffe

Vic Greenaway has been prominent in the general ceramics scene in Australia for over fifteen years.

He took a Diploma of Art at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and then completed an apprenticeship with Ian Sprague at Mungeribar Pottery. In 1974 he travelled through Japan, England and Scandinavia as a Churchill Fellow studying training situations in small workshops. On his return he established Broomhill Pottery in Victoria with the aim of training emerging potters. This development also included exhibitions and the establishment of outlets for the work.

Exhibitions are an important aspect of Vic Greenaway's personal development. He has exhibited widely in Australia and overseas. Vic also participated in the first Craft Expo '81 in Sydney and in Melbourne in 1982.

His exhibition pieces are renowned for the purity of their form and since 1982 he has been refining it. Vic's delicate decoration emphasises strength while the bands of dull lustre encircling each piece contain it. The interiors of the pots are as important as the exterior. Many have a black matt interior that accentuates the delicacy of the pale glaze and links the ornamentation with the shape.

The rims of most of his pots are complex: the black interior often continues past the rim some five cms. In others the base is black. The rims are sometimes flat and broad and at other times they are manipulated

into elliptic shapes. Others have double rims or applied collars.

Another important aspect of Greenaway's work is that he sets himself strict parameters and explores the possibilities within these constraints. This ensures constant refinement of form, decoration and colour; so that the very best is always produced within his limits.

These strictures force him to solve problems and to consider the different ways to achieve what he wants. In 1983 Vic's house and studio fell victim to the disastrous bushfires. During the following eighteen months he produced none of his own work, although he was still closely involved with the production work of the workshop. He found it difficult to pick up after this length of time away.

With a certain irony, the latest challenge Vic has set himself is wood firing. Wood firing has a mysterious attraction for potters. The roar and heat of the fire, the unpredictable results, the fly ash in the kiln, and the earthy, rustic nature of the firing process all contribute to the romance.

It is the unpredictability of the firing process that is the first challenge. This potter likes to have full control over everything and his wood-fired pieces are never rustic or earthy. The elegance of form and the simplicity of the decoration combine well with the evidence of the fire, warm flashes of pink and orange, and soft greys. The pots have an emery-like surface and the colours vary from a glossy grey/white to a deep warm orange.

In making things more difficult for himself, Vic uses the same clay for functional ware and exhibition pieces. It is a vitreous white stoneware clay and is not

1. Tall squared off thrown cylinder. Matt white and oatmeal glaze/black interior. 25 cms. Photo Ray Kinnane.

2. Bowl. Matt black and magnesium matt glaze, lustre rim. 16 cms. Photo Ray Kinnane.

3. Round base open form in stoneware. Brushwork in cobalt wash and lustre/black interior. 20 cms. Photo Ray Kinnane.

1. *Large bowl.* Black matt and oatmeal matt glaze. 32 cms wide. Photo Ray Kinnane.



2. *Spherical form.* Matt white and oatmeal glaze/black interior, lustre bands. 26 cms diameter. Photo Ray Kinnane.



3. *Woodfired form.* Unglazed, ribbed after thrown on wheel. 22 cms diameter. Photo Ray Kinnane.

4. Left, *Spherical form.* Pale blushes, local salt effects. Centre, *Small spherical form.* Right, *Round form.* Radial impressions, heavy fly ash. 1984. Photo David Reid.

5. *Open round form.* Straight sides. 1984. Photo David Reid.







1. *Round form.*
Elliptical top, double rim, heavy fly ash.
1984.
Photo David Reid.
2. *Round form.*
Squared top, double rim, heavy fly ash.
1984.
Photo David Reid.



considered acceptable for woodfiring. This does not daunt him.

In essence, he is restricting his palette by doing this. The importance of the firing process cannot be denied and the position in the kiln is the main key to the surface ornamentation. In an exhibition in December 1984 at Narek Galleries, Canberra, Vic was showing some outstanding wood-fired pots.

High romance came in the form of some humble timber. After much experimentation and disappointing results, he discovered an old brickworks that was being demolished. The dry, seasoned yellow box timber from the building gave exciting results. The clay finally responded and the wood-fired pots pictured are his results.

In these pieces, Vic was particularly conscious of shape and form. The simple spheres are softened by squared sides or flat, broad shoulders. Elliptical necks, double rims, flattened necks and gently ribbed sides all provide differences in surface planes, adding to the coloration and varying the forms.

The rims of some of the pots are emphasised by narrow rings of lustre. The lustres have no sheen. However, their use adds opulence to the simple forms. Several of these pots feature the matt black interiors seen in earlier work. This treatment of the interior gives depth to the space contained by the pot.

Vic Greenaway places small amounts of salt in crucibles by some pots giving localised glossy surfaces or a glinting, crystalline surface. The salt, fly ash and heat react with each other and with the clay to give each pot its unique ornamentation. The salt adds texture and eats the colour away. He has also been experimenting with *saggar* firing, which adds

smoke lines and smudges and assists the depth of colour.

Up until 1984 Broomhill Pottery had a large production team, producing a huge number of Broomhill pots. Vic was still closely involved with the smooth running of the workshop, teaching new trainees (many under the Crafts Board's trainee scheme) as well as developing his own work. Trying to successfully run the two operations became too much and the workshop has now been scaled down with only one other potter in the workshop. Warren Arthur is now in his fifth year at Broomhill; he managed the workshop while Vic was rebuilding.

The two men are looking forward to developing more interesting domestic ware and developing new lines in shapes and decoration. Having gotten locked in to a business, Vic himself is going back to basics, he is throwing domestic pieces, while still working on his own exhibition pieces.

It has been exciting watching the changes appearing in Vic's individual work as well as the Broomhill production work. The differences come from a resolution of direction, maturity and confidence.

These resolutions give him the capacity to succeed with his self-imposed challenge. He is hoping that the wood-fired work will lead to new directions. It is something of a diversion and probably only short-lived. We are privileged to share in the transition.

He is looking forward to a renaissance in his work and to getting more fun from it.

Meredith Hinchliffe is the executive director of the Crafts Council of the A.C.T.

The Bead Company

Angela Snelgrove

Tucked away amidst the towering rag-trade palaces of Surry Hills in Sydney, a tiny two-storey shop filled to the window-sills with beads is enjoying a thriving trade as well as supplying countless delights to bead aficionados.

The Bead Company claims to be the only major supplier of local and imported beads and their components in Australia.

But why have beads had a sudden resurgence of popularity? What is it about these small objects that has made them so appealing to people for thousands of years? A recent visit to this Aladdin's Cave of Beads found some answers and also discovered the owner and director of The Bead Company, John Wilkes and his bright-eyed office manager Donna Shandro, positively submerged beneath bags, sacks, shelves and strings of beautiful beads.





Donna explained that 60 percent of the annual turnover begins in October with the Christmas rush. The Queen Street Fair in Paddington which takes place every November also sees stall holders hunting out particular beads for necklaces and earrings. 'It's not unusual for us to have 20 or 30 people in the shop at one time but we have been dealing mostly wholesale in recent months so we're not dependent on individual buyers. We do keep a few made-up necklaces, bracelets and earrings in the front of the shop for the bus tours of the fashion houses in the area. They stop off as part of the tour and buy made-up beads for their daughters.'

The front room is indeed an enticement to the Gypsy in all of us. Shelves are crammed with boxes of imported beads: glass beads decorated with tiny flowers from Japan, noodle-shaped porcelain beads from Greece, more glass and acrylic beads in all shapes and sizes from Czechoslovakia, boxes of shell and bone in the shape of tiny fans from India, multi-coloured Inca beads from South America and strings of imitation crystal from Austria twinkle enticingly next to huge, chunky strands of beads from the Philippines in wood, coconut and shell. Round and smooth they hang from the wall like a string of onions. Imported beads from the Philippines make up a large part of the stock. Cheap and plentiful they have become a major export from these islands. Families earn a living by making beads in yellow, palm and white wood stripes, stunning to look at with a single bead large enough to fill the palm of your hand.

In the past year wholesale selling has taken off in a big way with fashion retailers buying beads for belts, sweaters and jewellery. The back rooms of The Bead Company are filled with huge sacks of beads including pastel-coloured clay beads called 'sugar beads'. These are so popular up to 200,000 a month are ordered. Schools and hospitals are big buyers and beaded therapeutic back massages are not unheard of either. A huge bag of blue 'donkey beads' is a puzzle. 'Originally they were made from donkey dung in Iran. The name sticks but of course they don't use dung any more', laughs Donna, delicately sniffing one just to make sure. Next to the donkey beads lie boxes of boar's tusks that are popular in necklaces as are the gold and silver plated beads used by jewellers in fine jewellery and as components in necklaces. Other types of beads avidly sought by the initiated are 'jug', 'pony', 'popcorn' and seeded beads.

John Wilkes does not look like the sort of man who would wear a string of beads with a carefree air, let



alone bring out his *macramé* on one of his many flights overseas to buy beads. His background is in fashion textiles and it is from this end of the market that he saw the enormous potential for beads and their components both in craft and fashion accessories.

Wilkes bought The Bead Company about two years ago. Six months later he moved the small shop from Paddington to the fifth floor of the Peter Weiss Fashion Warehouse in Surry Hills. 'Our customers started complaining about having to climb five flights of stairs to reach us so we decided to move into this smaller shop. But as you can see we are growing out of this place and I'm hoping to move into our own warehouse next year.' The business has grown to such an extent in the past twelve months they are also hoping to combat two major problems, mainly space and stock control, by introducing a computer.

John Wilkes' experience in textiles as managing director of a textile company in Britain seems to have given him the business acumen and finesse to turn a small enterprise like The Bead Company into a thriving trade supplier. Wilkes had seen a similar company in London. 'A friend ran a company called The Warehouse in London selling beads. It was wonderfully successfully and when I came to Australia I could see the potential for such a business here. Like The Warehouse I wanted to create a supermarket feel.' His customers are encouraged to take up small baskets to hold their finds whilst hunting through countless boxes and sacks for that elusive component. Wilkes has worked hard to build up the company. His day begins at 8.30am and often ends 12 hours later. Outlets in Perth and Brisbane and several country agents mean that there is a constant stream of orders. The morning *Craft Australia* was there The Bead Company was closed to the public but the atmosphere buzzed with activity as Wilkes dealt with a hold-up of five shipments of beads from the Philippines over the phone. 'It always happens around Christmas,' he groaned. The arrival of a courier from the Czechoslovakian Consulate adds a touch of the cosmopolitan as the courier squeezed his way past a



few privileged regular customers and some staff doing a bit of impromptu stock taking. Donna explained to me the problems of obtaining some stock. 'It's terribly difficult importing from some of the Eastern Bloc countries. For instance last month we had to put in an order to Czechoslovakia for all the beads we wanted in 1985, you have to plan that far ahead and anticipate what beads will be popular.' Transporting them back to Australia can also be a headache. Most beads from Europe, America and the Philippines can come by air, but for the glass beads sea freight has to be arranged.

Crammed between sacks and overflowing shelves upstairs is the weighing room where all the orders on the downstairs desk eventually end up. 'We have a full-time staff of six and there is always someone in this room dealing with wholesale orders. We weigh out beads in bags of 50-100 and pack them off. At the moment we get six-eight orders a day, often for hundreds of beads.'

With such a variety of beads extensive buying trips are necessary. John Wilkes tries to go overseas two or three times a year to buy beads from over 12

countries including Hong Kong, China, Japan, Holland and Germany. He buys tiny acrylic beads from Italy as well as the dainty glass and seed pearl beads from eastern Europe and the Indian and South America beads. Components such as thonging, clasps, earring clips, rayon and acrylic thread are sold to craft suppliers. The Bead Company is the only place in Australia where you can buy a unique round leather thonging from Greece and for those who like to make their own beads modelling clay and acrylic paint is also available.

The Bead Company is to the bead collector what the *charcuterie* is to the gourmet. It is easy to see after a browse around this shop why beads have always been loved and used in trade and commerce, love and war. Tactile and comforting beads appeal to our natural love of decoration and accumulation and The Bead Company seems to be proving that beads are still an important part of our lifestyle and culture.

Angela Snelgrove is a Sydney freelance journalist with an interest in the arts.

Photos Adrian Hall

Post Star Wars Crafting

Only small handfuls of humanity remain after World War III and in a parched, deserted world, gangs of mankind's last members fight for supremacy using a wonderful array of left-overs for weaponry and protection. Some will achieve degrees of surprising sophistication. As has always been managed in the past, hostile groups will be *dressed to kill*.

This object scenario was the underlying theme for a series of helmets enameller Ian Were produced beginning in 1982 that were included in the tripartite exhibition *Forces of Resilience* held at the Jam Factory Gallery during the 1984 Adelaide Festival of Arts.

In the following conversation with the painter Lynn Collins, Ian talks about his development, the thinking behind the helmets and his plans for the future.

An interview with Ian Were, enameller

Lynn Collins



■ You and I had very similar backgrounds also, comfortable middle-class upbringings, the strong influence of the church, we went to art school together, and we've both had the opportunity to throw it off and live by palatable, marketable art. I stopped making inoffensive paintings some time ago and it seems you too have reached a point where you have had a turn around from works bordering on the *cliché* to producing more difficult pieces. I can isolate certain incidents which affected my approach, what changed you?

IAN: I suspect it was having done the same things for so long that there seemed to be a limit . . .

■ But there appears quite a journey has been taken between the *mandala* assemblages you were producing in the seventies and your helmets, what happened? Was it a technical thing, a change in attitude, or . . .

IAN: I think it was the need (a) to do something different with enamel, realising that it had lots of other possibilities and (b) wanting to get away from something that was purely decorative. Enamelling, like any other medium, can become an obsession; you need to say, 'Right, the technique must not be so precious and so important that it becomes a statement about itself, use it to *make* a statement that seems important, not just drift along'.

■ And what triggered this thinking? Was it content or a risky new technique, was it the discovery of decals?

IAN: Yes, and discovering steel as a strong surface to work on, rather than working on flat soft copper that had to be attached to something, or in order to work larger, have bowls spun up, which *still* become relatively flimsy through firings. With steel there were new possibilities for making free standing forms. The work of John Baily and others extended my thinking and showed a direction from the pretty bowls I was producing. And with steel I was confronted no longer with bowls and plaques as formats, but with *large* rectangles which suggested a more painterly approach

. . . although I didn't take that line. I desperately wanted to get away from that and started working with decals and the possibilities of collage, still decorative, together with lustres, all quite wonderful, but not pushed as far as they *could* go.

■ How did you come across decals?

IAN: I'd been collecting books on enamelling and in Oppi Untracht's book **Enamelling on Metal** I saw opportunities for using decals in work I was currently doing using enamel and collage assemblages. Although I could use these commercial *kitsch* images in a collage manner, there were inherent limitations.

■ Did the decals lend themselves to your exploration of social and political issues in your work?

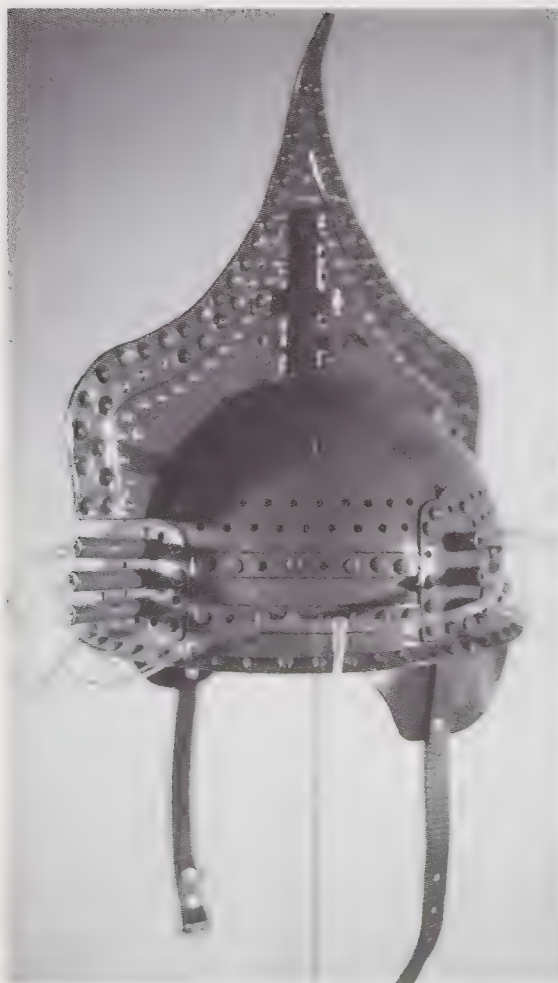
IAN: Yes, in retrospect, although I didn't know particularly in what direction. *Ocker Funk* was in vogue at that time and it encouraged my exploration with the decals in panels and discs like *Homage to Magritte via Blue Boy and Pinky* and *Cheap Blue Gainsborough (or Craft for Art's Sake)*.

It was more throwing images together to see what would happen and I don't think it was particularly successful. However I think that that *did* mark a desire to break away from the themes I was preoccupied with, figures in landscapes, the Lawrence Daws *mandala* . . .

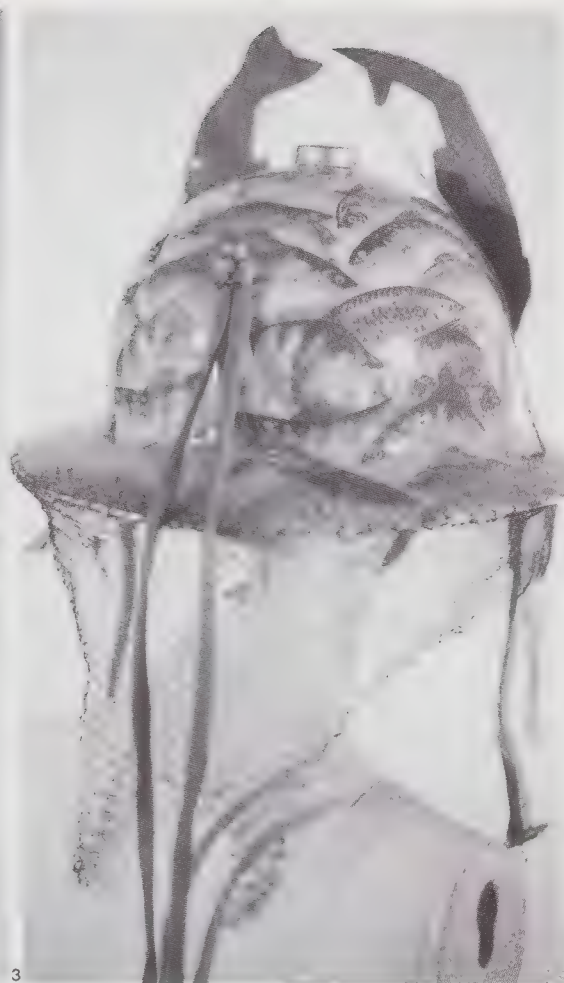
■ We had a very general art training although it did have a fine art bias, yet you said you resisted the painterly approach . . .

IAN: I always felt then I couldn't paint, and, rather than painting a picture of the pub over the road, I was more interested in the decorative arts, making a pair of cufflinks or turning a pot were far more satisfying and, in addition to the excitement of working in those media, you had a satisfying end product . . . and someone would say, 'I'll give you \$6.50 for that'.

■ At that time there were few people working in enamel, how did your work develop?, were there people around you could rub shoulders with, people who could push you?



2. *Captain Blu: Proto S4*. Enamel, decals on steel, mixed. 55 x 38 cms. 1982. Photo Ian Were.



3. *Helmet for a Slightly Japanese Angler*. Enamel, decals on steel mixed media. 30 x 33 cms. Photo Ian Were.

IAN: Yes, there was a small group that exhibited under the name of Enamellers of Adelaide, people such as John Baily, Bernard Hesling, Rhonda Thiele, Ninette Dutton, Jenny Gore, Jaqui Hick, there were about eight of them, and they were encouraging in terms of Enamel. I tended to work pretty much alone.

I think there is a great danger and it happened to me, that you become a specialist and insular because of it, sending up in the isolation of your studio for years on end ... that was part of the beauty of going to San Diego State to do the M.A., the break, and the exchange of ideas; there was a continual dialogue there, and two or three people who were really pushing the medium. The other thing about San Diego was that there was quite a large art department so you had immediate contact with all sorts of people, day and night, some people didn't start their day till 2 or 3 in the morning, and everyone would be wandering around checking out what other people were doing which was good, and quite intense. People were constantly enthusiastic about their work, 'Look what I've done! You *must* come and look at it!!'

■ And was San Diego the spur for the helmets?

IAN: Yes, and no, the basic forms were originally spun for a series of mock trophies ... and part of the truth of the helmets was that the forms really did work perhaps better on the head than as cups. So I had the inkling of the idea before I went and with San Diego being a military base ... there's all that dressing up and parading, like mass *mannequin* parades, *power*, and I wanted to try and push that.

The helmets were really never meant to be quite as serious as they were made out to be. The mileage they got when they were shown at the Jam Factory during the Festival was probably more than they warranted.

I wanted to make a statement that was cynical, but strong, whimsical and sarcastic; I wanted the humour to hopefully touch people.

■ And you didn't work exclusively in enamel ... ?

IAN: The first three helmets I did were enamel, but enamel has certain limitations so I drifted into the sculpture department, cast the next in bronze, and built the Japanese pop rivet number.

The departure from enamel was very enjoyable. Then, because I was spending weekends up in LA, I thought, why shouldn't I take my work with me? I forgot about enamels and started cutting up cardboard boxes. If I ever did any more helmets, that's the direction I'd want to go.

■ And will you?

IAN: I think I'll still pursue enamel and in sculptural terms but I want to get away from the formality of the helmets. During the next year I'd like to develop some work I started in San Diego, enamelling on tin cans, a different line and reasonably quick to produce. I haven't really pushed enamel far enough yet. I'd like to establish a new routine.

■ Has the time span between conception and completion of enamel work been a problem?

IAN: That's a question I've been asked often ... like 'Why do you go to so much trouble making a series of helmets?' The answer is, it's not, it's just the way I'm going.

I don't really have a complete answer to those people who are perhaps more aligned with the Fine Arts who come up with the quite valid criticism, 'If you believe in making *statements*, if that's so important to you, why are you spending so long involved in a lengthy process, using precious and semi-precious metals?' The medium is certainly durable at a time when permanence in art seems to be of no great concern or consequence. However, this is the direction I'm taking: I know how to do this best and the statement is therefore stronger because I know that. Mind you, there are times when I think they might be half right. The world is full of precious objects. I can understand

4. *This One for the Rose*. Enamel on steel, decals and lustre. 30 x 33 cms. 1982. Photo Ian Were.

5. *Thunderbird Helmet (Flo-Thru)*. Enamel, lustre on steel, mixed media. 40 cms. 1982. Photo Ian Were.

6. *Helmet for Religious Wars*. Cardboard, paint, mixed media. 98 cms. 1982. Photo Michal Kluvanek.

7. *Helmet for a Brain*. Acrylic, tubing, plastic brain, motor, L.E.D.'s. 80 cms. 1984. Photo Michal Kluvanek.

8. *Melrose Ave. Warrior*. Automotive lacquer on steel. Pop rivetted. 1984. Photo Michal Kluvanek.



the almost anti-craft, anti-precious craft movement I came across in San Diego and elsewhere in America, which advocates the making of a statement and with that having been made, the work should die, and the sooner the better.

■ That influenced you?

IAN: Yes, to a point. It was time to make some sort of stand, as inconsequential as it might be, and to use my work to express the deepening personal belief that we're inevitably getting closer to Armageddon and if it isn't a nuclear attack, it will be something else. It's very real, it's history repeating itself. All the bullshit written in the papers doesn't really matter because we're going to have amazing and dramatic changes . . . So the only thing to save your sanity is humour. Someone once said, 'You simply make this sort of stuff to appease your own conscience, because it makes you feel better' . . . and that's important, otherwise you might lose yourself, the only thing to do is to laugh about it.

■ You're saying that we're powerless to change the situation?

IAN: I'm not saying we don't have an effect on the inevitable, but in the end all we can do is to slow it down, and have a lot of enjoyment on the way.

■ We can 'Slow it down', so artists, enamellers, people *can* have an effect?

IAN: Robert Hughes said something like, 'No single painting or work of art has ever stopped one person killing another person', and that's pretty hard to argue with. But it seems clear that surely all the art created, all the amazing works that have been composed or painted, must be having *some* effect on humanity. And that's all we're doing.

It's foolish to say that we can change the direction of the world easily or we can change politicians, or that we can change whatever that amazing thing is that makes people kill other people, that's just part of humanity. But we can take the *good* part of humanity, use that, enjoy it, and make comments about it. People *are* changing, individual people *hopefully are* changed and we should give great pleasure, or make others laugh, a lot. The sum total of that must have an effect.

There's no way you could continue if you didn't think it was.

Lynn Collins is a painter and the Executive Director of the Crafts Council of South Australia.

The introduction to this feature appeared in **S.A. Crafts** Summer '83 'Ian Were — Preview'.



9. *This One for L.W.W., a Milliner.* Steel, pop rivets, electric motors. 43 cms. 1982. Photo Michal Kluvanek.

10. *Helmet for a Slightly Japanese Angler.* Enamel, decals on steel mixed media. 30 x 33 cms. 1982. Photo Michal Kluvanek.

11. *This One for Roy Orbison.* Motorcycle Helmet, trophy trim. 47 cms. 1982. Photo Michal Kluvanek.



... Sandy was a fine dancer himself, very light on his feet and easy to waltz with, so the girls made out. When the dancing subject was exhausted Sandy would drag some hair out of his horse's mane and say, 'How's the concertina?' 'It's in there,' Kate would answer. Then turning round she would call out, 'J-oe, bring the concer'.'

In an instant Joe would strut along with it. And Sandy, for the fiftieth time, would examine it and laugh at the kangaroo-skin straps that Dave had tacked to it, and the scraps of brown paper that were plastered over the ribs of it to keep the wind in; and, cocking his left leg over the pommel of his saddle, he would sound a full blast on it as a preliminary. Then he would strike up **The Rocky Road to Dublin**, or **The Wind Among the Barley**, or some other beautiful air, and grind away untiringly until it got dark, until Mother came and asked him if he wouldn't come in and have supper. Of course, he always would. After supper he would play some more. Then there would be a dance.

Kate's Wedding. On Our Selection. Steele Rudd

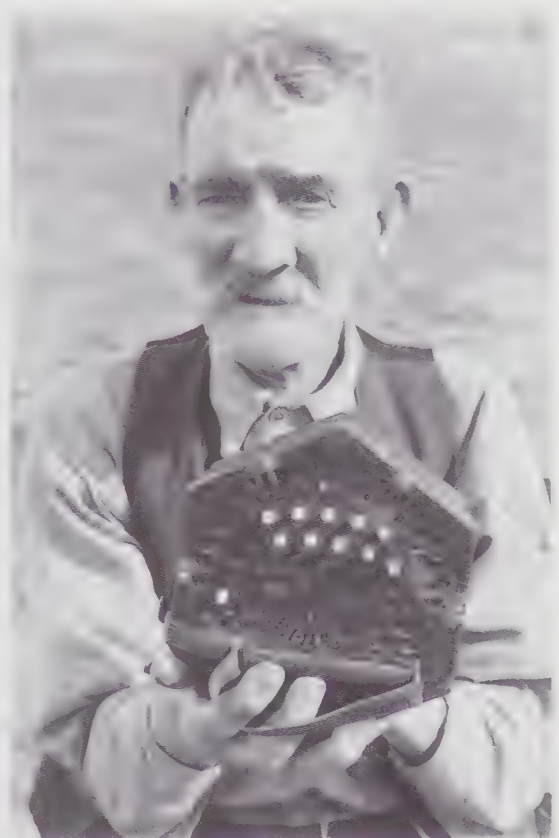
Stormy's Concertina Workshop

Peter Hyde is an Adelaide musician and concertina player. Working as a seaman out of Port Adelaide, he learned to repair concertinas out of necessity. He has marshalled a wide range of restoration skills to allow him to make all the repairs necessary to restore concertinas to working order.

Mr Hyde recently explained how he began his romance with concertinas to **Craft Australia**.

Peter told us Australia once had a flourishing concertina manufacturer, John Meredith. John was a well known Australian folklore collector. He spent a long time in the 1950s researching into a John Stanley of Bathurst NSW, who was known in the 1860s as the Concertina Doctor. Stanley was one of many who came in search of gold. Like most he found the gold rather elusive. He then turned his hand to bar work, then horse breaking. Occasionally he drove cattle overland to Melbourne. Stanley carried a concertina with him most of the time; when the instrument broke, he fixed it himself. Before long he settled in Bathurst and began repairing local concertinas. It was a natural progression for him to begin making concertinas by importing some parts from the UK. It is thought that Stanley made about 500 concertinas. Very few seem to remain today but the interest in concertinas still survives and they continue to be played.

My own interest in the concertina developed about 11 years ago, while on a camping holiday at Moonta in South Australia; I was awakened one morning by the sound of someone singing sea shanties accompanied by the concertina. It turned out to be a well-loved folkie here in Adelaide, Arthur Bower. As my friendship with Arthur developed, I too wanted to play and sing. In the next two years I never went past a junk, antique or second-hand shop without stopping to see if they had a concertina. When I finally got one it was a Salvation Army *Anglo* made by Lachenal. It cost \$48.00. There were a few small problems and I was warned by Arthur that it would be very easy to damage if I tried to repair it. There was no one in Adelaide who could help me with repairs. So it had to sit tight for a while. As luck would have it, I made a trip over to the UK shortly thereafter. Whilst there I made a special trip to London to visit Crabb Concertinas. Crabb was then the major maker in the UK. He turned out to be very helpful and explained a few do's and don'ts along with a few running repair tips. So on my return to Australia I was able to get my concertina into playable condition.



It was after this success that I returned to deep sea work (I had been working in the Port Adelaide tugs), I thought I would like a new hobby to fill in the time off watch while at sea. Arthur had been complaining there were few people in Australia capable of making a set of concertina bellows. So here was a hobby I could develop. I was able to get some basic advice from Frank O'Gallagher, a Sydney harp maker who also did repair work on concertinas. Then it took uncountable hours of trial and error to develop my bellows-making skill. It was not until six years later that I thought I was making a first class set of bellows. On a couple of occasions one of my shipmates said 'I saw a set of your bellows fly out your port hole; they don't float too well either'. I hope old Neptune plays the squeeze box.

During this period people began to ask me to do other concertina repair work. As luck would have it I come from a long line of craftspeople, so I find it easy to spend the long hours needed to develop my skills. To try my skills I now had enough instruments of my own in various states of disrepair. This saved other people's instruments from my mistakes (although they turned out to be few).

The concertina was developed during the height of the Industrial Revolution, and a lot of the original tools and materials are now difficult to obtain.



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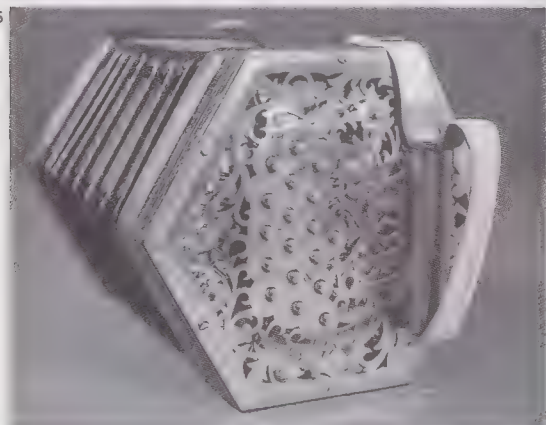
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1. F. W. Holland holds a concertina made for him by John Stanley of Bathurst. Stanley always put the name of the owner in the endplate. Photo John Meredith, Thirlmere, NSW.

2. The sea-going workshop M. F. Trovbridge.

3. Peter Hyde at work.

4. Peter Hyde in song.



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5. An A. C. Jeffries Son 'Anglo' concertina endplate. c1930.

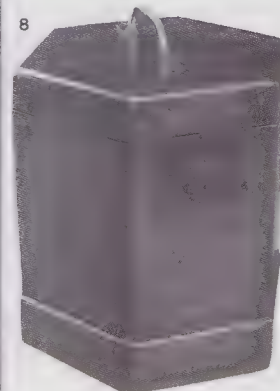
6. A. C. Jeffries Son concertina showing imported papers on bellows.

7. A. C. Jeffries Son 'Anglo' gold blocking.

8. A carrying case for the instrument.



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1. Gold blocking tool.
2. Lachenal duet concertina under restoration.
3. Peter Hyde says, 'A lot of bloody hard work'.
4. Wheatstone 'English' system concertina. c1860.
5. Crabb 'Triumph' system concertina developed for the Salvation Army.
6. The Crabb nameplate.





1. Nameplate from a Lachenal concertina.

2. Lachenal 'Anglo' system concertina. This instrument was produced for the Salvation Army and the endplate has 'SA' on it in silhouette.



In addition, the knowledge of quite a few trades is necessary for an effective approach to the task of restoration. This includes fine leather work, gold blocking, French polishing and veneer repair to silversmithing, fitting and turning, wood joinery turning and reed making. I have called on the help of many of Adelaide's craftspeople to teach me the crafts needed for my work. Most concertinas come to me for restoration after lying around someone's garage or attic for years. Most of the leather parts, such as the bellow valves and pallets will need replacing. It is unfortunate that most bellows would be repairable, but for the bad repair work often done by people who do not understand this type of work. Occasionally the leather parts have 'Red Rot'. This is a very damaging attack on leather. David Tillbrook of the S.A. Museum, one of the leading conservators here in S.A. was able to formulate a leather dressing for me that should stop any further attack against the leather.

Another major problem can be caused by the shrinkage of the timber on the end plates. Sometimes I find quite large parts of the end plates missing. Luckily over the years I have kept drawings of all the concertinas I have worked on, so I am able to replace the missing part with the original design.

Tuning can cause a few problems too. A concertina is a fixed pitch instrument, built mostly before the First World War. During the last 100 years the concert hall has gone through about three pitch changes. So most old concertinas find themselves out of pitch with other modern instruments. They may well be in obscure keys like A flat and E flat or B flat and F and sometimes in meantone temperament. Most folk musicians require a concert pitch of G, C or D. The problem with re-tuning a free reed is that it has to be filed down at the root to flatten and on the tip to sharpen. This is more of a problem on better instruments as much more time was spent in the manufacture getting the reed down in thickness for optimum performance leaving very little room for re-pitching. I have always refused to re-pitch into another key.

The approach to concertina restoration had to go further than just stabilizing. The instruments are going to be played, at times, very vigorously. Naturally it is important the bellows are air tight, so a new set of bellows is often called for. As most of these instruments have had a hard life most will need French polishing and probably a few timber veneers replaced. The metal end plates may well need re-plating. This has to be done if the original plate is worn through.

Some models of concertinas had gold blocking on the bellows. The tools for this job I have had to get made in Florence as I have not been able to find a maker of these tools here in Australia. Some of the better quality instruments had high quality fill-in papers on the bellows. There is a printer in the UK who still prints them but they are rather costly, so most people asked me to leave them off. They can put them on themselves at a later date if they want.

After all this work, the instrument will look like new. But they are not for display, they will often be used every day.

There are, at the moment, about three major manufacturers of traditional concertinas. Each maker has orders in front of him to last two to three years. There are some cheaper instruments on the market made in Italy, but they have accordion reeds inside and they are good for a learner's instrument. Their quality of sound is not as good as the English traditional concertina.

A lot of my restoration work takes place while at sea and I must have the only seagoing concertina workshop in the world. It's an ideal environment with plenty of time off watch to fill in. I do all my work at sea in my cabin. It's a bit small (2.5m x 3.5m) but it's surprising how much can be put on top of a bunk when it's not in use. I also find time on watch very useful. I have solved many problems when standing on look-out in complete solitude for hours at a stretch.

Peter Hyde is a concertina player, restorer and a sailor.



David Seibert

Dianne Peach is a connoisseur of clay and wholly aware of what is attainable from the exercise of her craft.

Her conceptually strong, technically excellent pieces in porcelain and stoneware thoroughly demonstrate her mature command of clay as an expressive medium.

Since 1966 she has embraced many facets of the craft, from preparing clay in Merv Feeney's pottery, building kilns, running a studio gallery and teaching. Currently, along with a full-time commitment to her own studio work, she is Director of the Board of the Queensland Potters Association and responsible for their Newsletter.

Dianne began her career making functional work that continues to be highly valued.

Ten years ago she started developing non-functional and decorative forms which exclusively occupy her production today.

With almost 20 years of professional involvement, her work has earned respect from fellow ceramicists and much admiration from collectors.

Many private and several important public collections, including the National Gallery, Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Western Australia and Power House Museum in Sydney contain fine examples of her work.

Born and trained in Brisbane, her initial studies with Milton Moon at the Old Tech, now the Queensland College of Art, augmented with summer schools and workshops, provided the foundation upon which she has built her solid professional reputation.

Dianne is a warm, quietly spoken individual who devotes a tremendous amount of time, energy and thought to her work.

Asked if she saw herself as an artist, she answered, 'Yes, I probably do think of myself more as an artist or somebody who just works with clay rather than being a potter. While I was doing a lot of functional work, I would quite easily call myself a potter, but now I don't think what I am doing says I'm a potter'.

In the late '60s and early '70s Dianne taught classes at her Bellbird Studio. Believing it would allow freedom



to pursue her own work, she became, like so many artist-teachers, 'properly drained' from the experience.

Abandoning teaching, she found a job as a drafting assistant in the Architect's Office at the University of Queensland. She then took off for Europe in 1976 where she spent many hours in the galleries and museums. She even attended workshops in glass blowing while working for a publisher of children's books in England.

Dianne returned to Australia in 1978 and again settled down seriously in her Brisbane studio. This reaction to the vicissitudes of teaching and need to broaden her knowledge put a seven year break in her exhibition record.

This period obviously allowed for valuable experiences both within the studio and abroad which have significantly contributed to her maturity as an artist. With a great flood of activity since her return from Europe, Dianne has had seven solo exhibitions and participated in 23 group exhibitions.

She puts a tremendous amount of effort into making her work look simple and spontaneous. The very nature of her materials, the complex processes in their formation and decoration and the risk in firing, makes extreme demands on her skills, control and critical faculties.

Dianne's acute self-criticism will not allow her to exhibit anything that has not passed the high standards of aesthetic and technical excellence she expects from her work.

She finds the main drawback working with clay is that so much time can be spent refining and decorating a piece to then find it cracked or distorted in the final firing. 'A crack is an obvious flaw but there are so many other things someone else wouldn't notice, but I notice and then I really don't feel happy about the piece because I just didn't want that to happen ... it was beyond my control.'

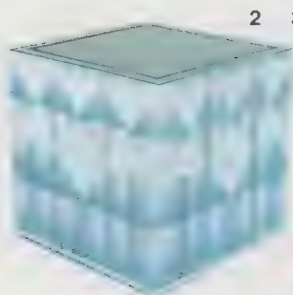
The firing process, while she sees it an annoyance also has its magic; for it is the ultimate test of a piece's structural integrity.

This obsession with control however does not deaden her work, rather it intensifies its presence through

1. *Fan*. Porcelain, slat built fan, slip cast base. 25 x 5 x 28 cms.

2. *Teapot*. Slip cast and slat built. Black underglaze over stencils.

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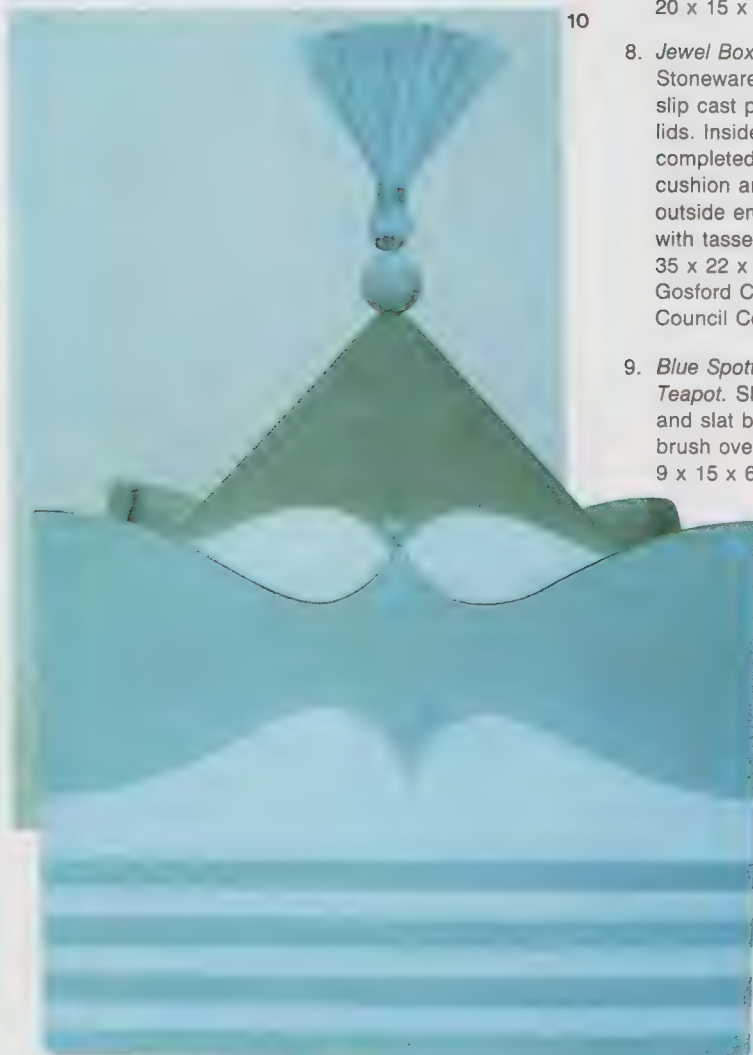
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6. *Jewel Box.*
Stoneware slab with
slip cast porcelain
lids. Inside
completed with
cushion and
outside embellished
with tassel.
25 x 16 x 16 cms.
F. Spork Collection.

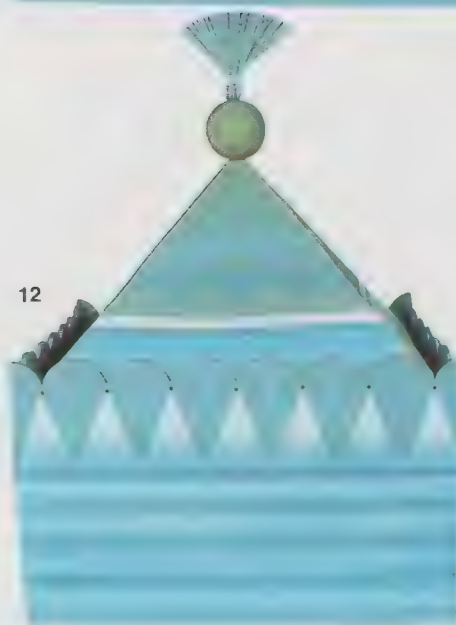
7. *Teapot V*
Decoration. Slip
cast assembly. Air
brush over stencils.
20 x 15 x 6 cms.

8. *Jewel Box.*
Stoneware slab with
slip cast porcelain
lids. Inside
completed with
cushion and
outside embellished
with tassel.
35 x 22 x 22 cms.
Gosford City
Council Collection.

9. *Blue Spotted*
Teapot. Slip cast
and slab built. Air
brush over stencils.
9 x 15 x 6 cms.



11



12

10. *Jewel Box.*
Stoneware slab box
with slip case
porcelain lid. Inside
completed with
cushion and
outside embellished
with tassel.
15 x 10 x 10 cms.

11. *Jewel Box.*
Underglaze colours,
platinum lustre lid.
16 x 12 x 12 cms.

12. *Jewel Box.*
Stoneware slab box
with slip cast
porcelain lid. Inside
completed with
cushion and
outside embellished
with tassel.
30 x 21 x 21 cms.



Picture Screen.
Porcelain. Air brush
over stencils.

painstaking refinement resulting in almost flawless structures and finishes.

Any doubtful pieces are reserved to a special section of her studio. 'I will look at them from time to time. I might change my opinion about a piece or it might give me new ideas. Sometimes accidents can give me new ideas. After they have sat around and if they haven't redeemed themselves, they go off to the dump.'

For Dianne, the working process is all consuming, the best results come from being involved, 'more or less, 24 hours a day for a certain length of time. I eat, sleep and work clay and the ideas just come thick and fast'. Many of her concepts simply arrive from sitting quietly and daydreaming. 'I build things in my mind's eye. If I need to, I'll sketch it but usually I just picture it in three dimensions, then I might do a mock-up to see how it should go together.'

What involves her the most at the moment is the whole slipcasting process. She begins with a basic shape, then cuts, reconstructs and adds to it. 'I think it's just working with the slip, be it a flat slab and

making something out of that or pouring it into a mould and then playing with it. I like constructing something, not just throwing it on the wheel but building with slabs, tubes and other bits.'

Dianne works exclusively in porcelain and stoneware that are fired together in an electric kiln. She decorates her pieces by staining the body with underglaze applied with an airbrush.

She pays strict attention to the shape of the piece and begins with one side applying cut paper stencils, then moving on to the next either continuing the same design or working in opposition. This is then sprayed and fired, the final effect is not fully evident until the work emerges from the kiln.

The decorative effect of light plays an important role in her shadow boxes, fans and picture screens. She shaves off layers of the slabs to vary their density, allowing light to play through the translucent porcelain.

Her studies in painting at the Old Tech with Roy Churcher gave her a basic appreciation for colour and composition but her current style is far removed from the painterly methods she was taught as a student.

Dianne's work is definitely enriched through a knowledge of architecture and deep appreciation for the traditions of sculpture and painting.

Her repertoire of non-functional and abstract forms includes boxes, cubes, picture screens, fans, bowls, jars and teapots. Lacking monumentality, these small-scale, intimate works are bound to the intrinsic nature of clay, its formation and the firing process. The teapots are her latest addition to this grouping.

While making functional work, she has never made teapots for exhibition. This new work demonstrates her ability to manipulate something without destroying its identity or integrity. 'I like doing them because they are quite a challenge, considering their shape, function and decoration. I work on them as a sort of puzzle, starting off with the cube or half cube, then decide where I am going to have the handle, spout and lid. I just play around with those combinations.'

All of her current work has a precise architectonic quality, with an attention to refined surfaces and detail which delights both the eye and the hand. Geometrically based, it reveals a thorough fascination with minute structural variation and integrated decorative motifs which animate and bring the work alive. These disciplined, aesthetically satisfying works remain totally accessible through their small scale and functional association. They are serious without being dry or pedantic and their visual and structural strength possess a unique classic elegance.

Dianne states there is no intentional feminist basis to her work, however I sense it addresses itself to an ingrained feminine aesthetic. Her subject-matter — jewel boxes, fans, teapots — are derived from a woman's traditional vocabulary of forms. In her hands they are strong in design, imaginative in construction, decorative without being flamboyant and realised in extremely delicate and fragile materials.

I read them as symbols of the new woman who is both aware and proud of her femininity while in full command of her role in contemporary society.

This artist explores these meanings through her manipulation of the familiar arriving at pertinent statements which deeply penetrate our collective awareness.

It is this which gives Dianne's aesthetically appealing, technically sophisticated pieces their subtle power and meaning.

David Seibert reports on the Arts on ABC Radio. He is also a Senior Instructor in Fine Arts at the Queensland College of Art.

Knives Postscript

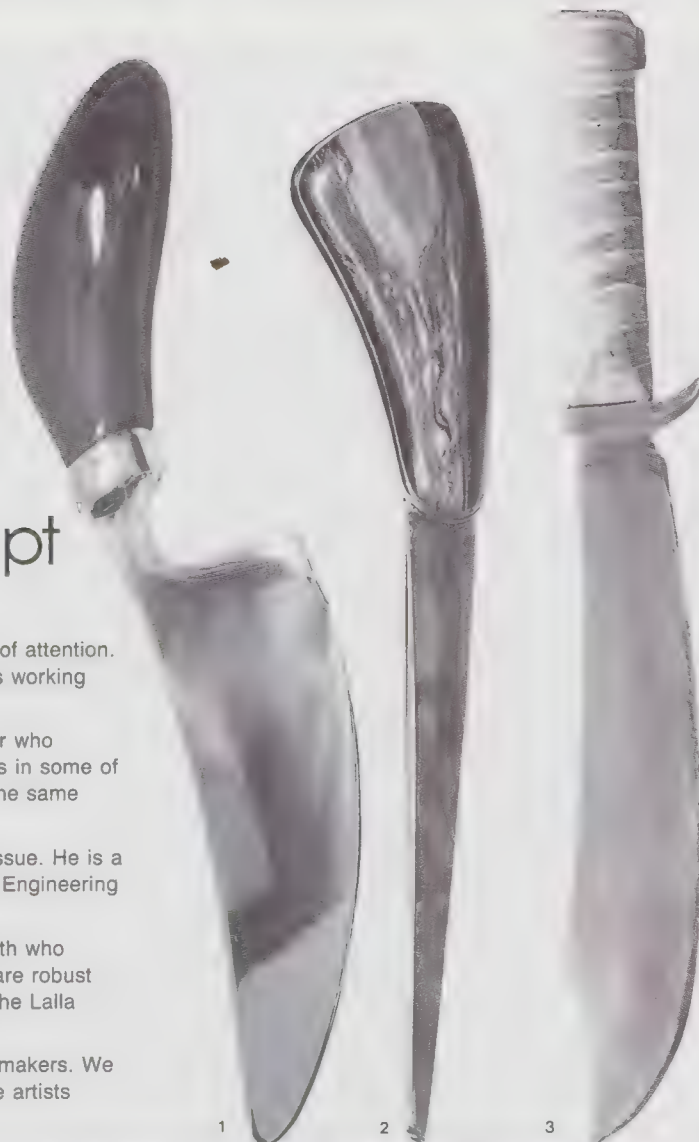
Our Winter article on knives drew a lot of attention. We also discovered some other artists working with knife designs.

Wendy Manwaring is a well-known jeweller who incorporates interesting Australian minerals in some of her work. With her knives, she has used the same material for handles.

Gary Butler was discussed in our Winter issue. He is a WA knife-maker, currently running Labraft Engineering in Welshpool.

Dominic Fletcher is a Tasmanian blacksmith who usually works in wrought iron. His knives are robust examples of the smith's art. He operates the Lalla Forge in Lilydale.

This completes this year's survey of knife-makers. We hope that a future survey will turn up more artists working in this fascinating area.



1. **Wendy Manwaring.**
Paté knife. Agate handle.
2. **Wendy Manwaring.**
Paper knife.
3. **Dominic Fletcher.**
Throwing knife.
4. **Gary Butler.**
Hunting knife.





Introducing BATSFORD BLUES



Batsford is introducing an entirely new series devoted to embroidery and needlecraft. These paperbacks are characterised by their distinctive blue jackets, reasonable price and authors who are highly respected in their fields.

Using Simple Embroidery Stitches

ANNE MORRELL

Anne Morrell (formerly Anne Butler) has chosen 20 of the most popular embroidery stitches, and her aim is to show not only how to work them, but also how to use them effectively in finished pieces of embroidery, either on their own or in combination with other stitches. For each stitch there is a working diagram, an explanatory text and a photograph of the stitch in progress. This introductory page is followed by a series of photographs showing examples of the stitch in use, some historical, others from the work of contemporary embroiderers; all serve to illustrate the rich variety of effects which can be obtained with one stitch. The basic techniques and materials necessary for embroidery are explained in an introduction, together with some hints for the student on how to work with a wide range of stitches.

Anne Morrell is the author of *The Batsford Encyclopaedia of Embroidery Stitches*.

4 colour plates, 83 Black and white photographs, 29 line drawings
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Patterns for Canvas Embroidery

DIANA JONES

This guide to canvas work patterns provides a framework within which the embroiderer can construct his or her own designs. Colour, design, methods, equipment and the uses to which canvas embroidery can be applied are explained in the introduction. Diana Jones then discusses geometric patterns, three-dimensional patterns, borders, flower patterns, lettering, stitches, stretching and finishing. There are numerous suggestions for articles to make such as kneelers, rugs and bags. Many of the patterns are based on traditional designs, which can be adapted and modified to produce lively, modern effects.

11 colour photographs, 55 black and white photographs, 131 line illustrations
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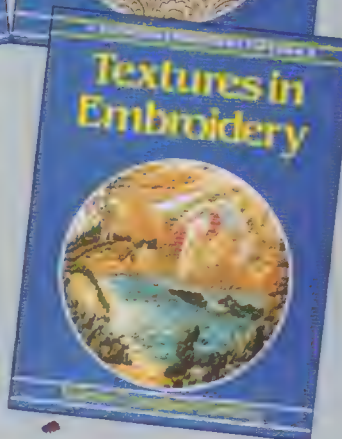
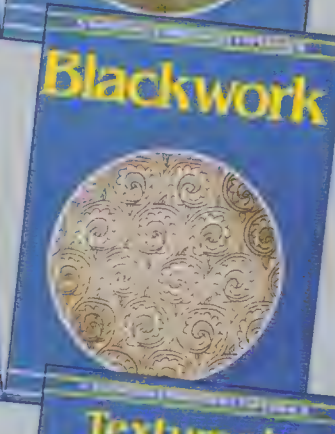
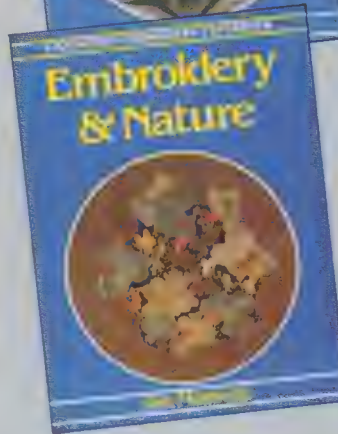
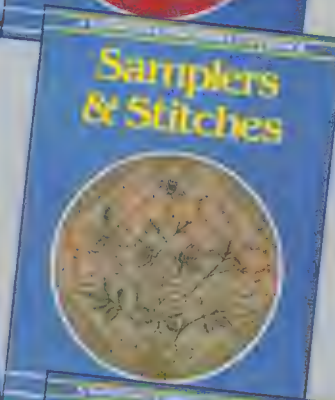
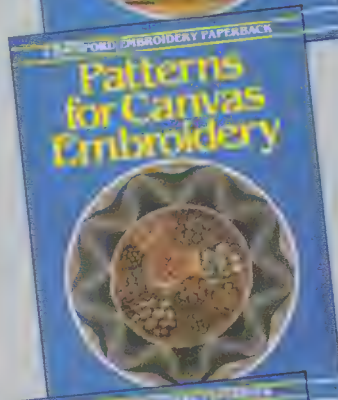
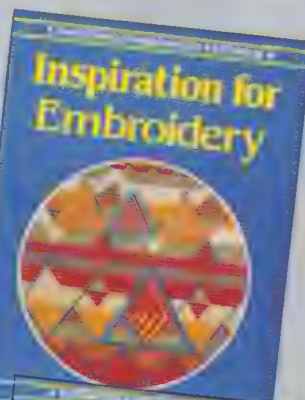
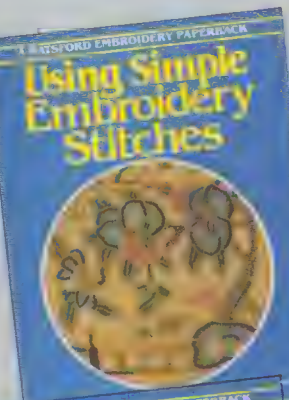
Embroidery and Nature

JAN MESSENT

The forms and textures of nature are ideal sources of inspiration for the embroiderer. Jan Messent, a professional embroiderer, explains how designs can be discovered in nature and translated into embroidery. The chapters cover every aspect of design — composition, colour, pattern and texture — and show how to use a variety of stitches and techniques for different effects. Also described are the methods of research and of recording observations which will help to give the design more interest. There are over 300 exceptional illustrations which will encourage all embroiderers to experiment with new ideas and produce their own designs.

168 pages, 5 colour photographs, 155 black and white photographs, 160 line drawings
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Inspiration for Embroidery

CONSTANCE HOWARD

Constance Howard has compiled a book of inspiration for the embroiderer who has a good working knowledge of stitchery but may have had little or no practice in designing. Sufficient instruction and information are given to encourage the building up of ideas, from the simple basic structure to the more completed finished design. After an introductory note on Background Appreciation, Constance Howard gives sections on Sources of Inspiration; Design; Texture, colour, tone; Special Areas of Design including embroidery for dress, the household, interior decoration, ecclesiastical work and heraldry.

240 pages, 4 colour plate, 322 black and white illustrations
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Samplers and Stitches

Mrs ARCHIBALD CHRISTIE

First published in 1920, Mrs Christie's *Samplers and Stitches* has become a classic handbook for embroiderers. The stitches are arranged in groups such as Flat stitches, Looped stitches, Chained stitches, Knotted stitches, Composite stitches, Canvas stitches and Drawn Fabric stitches. There are also chapters on blackwork, cut and drawn work, couching, appliqué and quilting. All the stitches are carefully explained with detailed text and clear diagrams, and the photographs illustrate the use of stitches in finished patterns and old embroideries; the whole book forms a complete and systematic approach to the art of embroidery.

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MARY GOSTELOW

Blackwork, the art of black-on-white embroidery, is an historic and elegant technique which lends itself to beautiful and distinctive patterns. Mary Gostelow traces its beginnings and styles, covering the work thematically and by country. There are chapters on the history of blackwork; English blackwork; Blackwork of the world; Artists blackwork; and Costume Blackwork. These are followed by practical sections for today's embroiderer on techniques (including needles, fabrics, threads and stitches), design and contemporary work. The book is liberally illustrated with examples of historical and modern work, portraits and design sketches giving pattern detail.

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Ph. (03) 267 7466

Ken Unsworth's sculptural works reflect his keen understanding of the formal elements of tensioned structure. His works often begin with *maquettes* or small models that allow him to test his ideas, mentally and physically.

It was these *maquettes* and their refinement that led **Craft Australia** to ask Anthony Bond, curator of contemporary art at the Art Gallery of NSW to write on this aspect of Unsworth's work.

Two Realms

Ken Unsworth, Sculptor

Anthony Bond

Paradoxically the static and permanent works of Ken Unsworth are still less known than his performances and installations. It says a great deal for the presence of his *tableaux* performed in 1975 and 1977 that they remain familiar to anyone with an interest in Australian contemporary art. Very few people saw the performances, yet their photographic and video representations have been powerful enough to become a part of our visual memory.

The body works arose from drawings and *maquettes* for sculptures and it was the clarity of the sculptural concept that gave the performances their memorable value. However, from 1975, the *maquettes* took on more dramatic connotations with an aura of anxiety and tension, certainly influenced by the use of the body as object in such works as the *5 Secular Settings For Sculpture As Ritual* in 1975 at Central Street.

Sculpture in Australia during the seventies seems to have been caught in curious temporal disjunctions. Formalist steel sculptors continued to refine the Academy of St. Martin's formulae of Anthony Caro and earlier surrealist survivals from the thirties produced even more complex accretions of materials. 'Relics & Rituals', an exhibition organised by Robert Lindsay for the National Gallery of Victoria in 1981 showed a good example of this. While both areas produced exceptional examples, they seemed to lack either a contemporary quality or regional identity. With one or

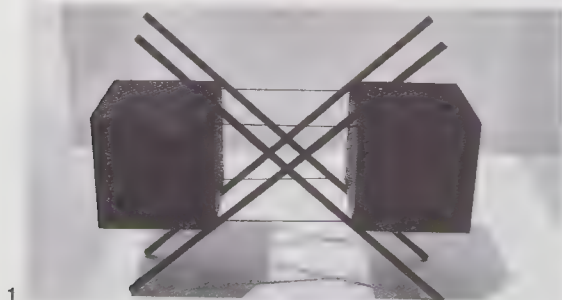
1. *Maquette* for box constructions. 1978-79. Art Gallery of NSW (AGNSW)

2. *Maquette*. 1976. AGNSW

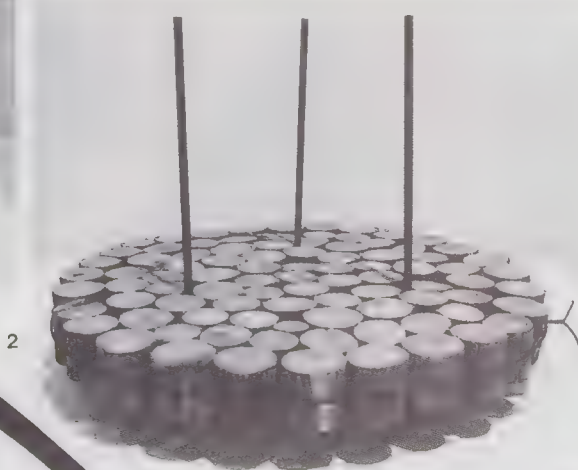
3. *Maquette*. 1977. AGNSW

4. *Body as Object Piece*. Central Street. 1975.

5. *Maquette*. 1984. Courtesy Roslyn Oxley. Photo Jill Crossley.



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two rare exceptions, conceptual art was left to form the only genuine contemporary activity related to sculpture.

The influence of conceptual art in other parts of the world was a crucial factor in breaking the bind of formal academicism with its refinement of formula, without plunging back into the solipsism of lyrical expression. Minimalism often acted as a material discipline through which conceptual premises could be manifested in form. In Australia unfortunately, minimalism only took hold in painting and even then more often as a style than a discipline. Ken Unsworth stands out against this background as one sculptor who has benefited enormously from the rigour of minimalist principles while bringing conceptual questions into the very form of the works giving them a sense of necessity that is rare in object-makers of the seventies.

Unsworth's *maquettes* reflect this marriage of ideologies. There are series of works that deal with a particular idea. They may span long periods of time and reappear as parallel strands in his drawing, sculpture and performance. An idea which was expressed in drawing in 1969 and intended for a fibreglass sculpture reappeared in 1975 as one of the *Body as Object* series at the ICA and again as a *maquette* for a larger steel sculpture in 1984.

Predominantly formal concerns link all the works prior to his recent bitumen drawings and reliefs. A

traditional concern of sculpture has been balance and structural tensions, yet in Unsworth's work it is refined down to the essence. Extraneous detail and references are cut away. In accordance with minimalist principles the structure is in effect a product of the forces required to maintain its form. While Carl Andre derives a rectangular stack out of rectangular bricks, using a visible criterion on a flat plane, Unsworth has taken the step of using the invisible but equally public and pragmatic criterion of gravity, opposed forces, the fulcrum and so on.

As with classical sculpture the moment of equilibrium carries within it, the implication of dramatic change through release of energy contained for the moment.

There is no denying that this use of potential is a dramatic or even theatrical device that relates to the photography of Cartier Bresson and, for that matter, to 19th century social documentary paintings where the tantalising event is about to unfold. Unlike Victorian melodrama the Unsworth forms employ dynamic pictorial narrative that are devoid of references outside of the physical components of the work and the essential forces of nature.

Another link to minimalism is Unsworth's constant use of repeated elements that are stacked, balanced,



wedged or suspended to make up a united form. Jonathan Watkins, in his essay on Ken Unsworth for the *Presence and Absence* Exhibition in Perth, 1983, equates the automated sounding of the middle 'C' of *In Concert* with a heartbeat, hence bringing the purely formal aspect of repetition back into the realm of biological and psychological experience. This undoubtedly happens with works such as *In Concert* from that exhibition and even in sculpture such as *Nike* in Wollongong where the 5 monstrous leaves seem to be in a state of unfolding, challenging gravity and suggesting the possibility of hidden forces below the surface.

The concept of balance and wedging has formed the core for a great many of the *maquettes* and performance works. Among these, the pieces made in Poland in 1979 are the most striking. A box is suspended in space by the expedient of attaching it to the wall by wires and then forcing it into dynamic tension by the introduction of a wedged pole.

The body work from 1977 in which the artist's spread-eagled form is held in place by a long pole wedged between his shoulder blades is closely related to the works carried out in Poland in 1979. As early as 1974 he made a piece for the C.A.S. exhibition at the Hogarth Gallery in which tubes of plastic filled with earth were stacked wall-to-wall to form a dynamically self-supporting arch. In this case as, in some of the others, the *maquette* was made after the installation as a kind of permanent record rather than as a sketch for the final product. Many drawings and *maquettes* exist only as possible projects subject only to a suitable context.

On his return from Poland he made a *maquette* for the Martin Place Sculptural Commission. This consisted of a series of boxes notched together and held in place by wires attached to one point on the ground. It would have been a spectacular work for the site.

In some respects this work is a hybrid of the black boxes and the suspended stones. Some of Unsworth's best known pieces overseas are the river stones which he has variously propped and suspended from 1975 to today. The first of these was constructed at Central Street as an installation for photography only. It consisted of river stones balanced all round the perimeter of the room thereby supporting each other laterally.

In the suspended stone circles the individual stones are self-supporting and yet their implied relationship to each other is one of mutual support. In this there is an element of disturbing illusionism. The stone circle at the Kroller-Muller Museum (The Netherlands) and its sister piece at the Art Gallery of Western Australia consist of a circle of stones each suspended by 3 wires from 3 attachment points either on poles or in the ceiling. The final effect is of a levitating circle of mystic stones 462 mms off the floor and only two or three centimetres from each other. These are caught up in 3 cores of wires that read as lines of force.

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There have been several variations on this theme including the body piece from 1977 in which the stones are replaced by his own body and picked out by the strong circular image of a spotlight.

The image of a circle is another recurring feature of his work. The circle is more than a piece of theatrical lighting in the body sculptures providing as it does, a strong formal element with connotations of human scale. It appears in the stone works as a deliberate option not simply as a natural mechanical solution. The theme of concentric rings particularly suggests water and pools with all their historic and psychological associations.

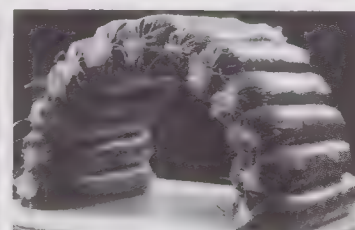
At the 1975 Mildura Triennial he constructed earth pieces using the circle. These had existed as drawings for granite works but were made by cutting turf and building up the soil to create a series of titled discs out of the lawn and another piece in which a trench was dug with an arch set into it on which the turf was replaced. This piece suggests some hidden process beneath the earth or a buried disc. *Razorback* 1975 is a piece made by arranging different lengths of sticks in the soil to form a sharply defined arch also suggesting some subterranean extension.

In the eighties Unsworth continues to work on these themes. In 1985 he will assemble a stone work in Paris by request of the Paris *Biennale*. He is also working on new *maquettes* where forms are trapped in grids and cages. Among the recent works is a suspended rocket-like form that echoes drawings of the 1960s and a body work derived from them in 1975. Unlike some artists he has not felt it necessary to make a career of linear unidirectional steps but maintained an organic dialogue with his own past and present. The past is littered with great ideas awaiting the opportunity or set of circumstances to give them form. The latest development in his work has been the appearance of painted relief. These expressive, even tormented, images out of European and Japanese psycho-history draw heavily on images that appeared in minimalist form in his performance, but their ethos is more like that of the installations which I have not discussed here. Indeed Unsworth's work, like the earth works, exists almost as two realms, one subterranean and metaphysical; the other overt, public and essentially formal. In concentrating on the sculpture I have only hinted at the other half of this artist's considerable vision.

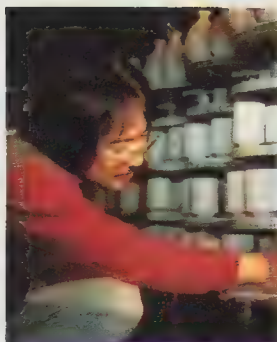
Anthony Bond is the Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of NSW.



1. *Maquette*. 1978-79.
2. *Nike*. 6.2 metres. Painted steel. 1980. Art Gallery Wollongong.
3. *Installation*. 1979. Stzuki Museum, Lodz, Poland.
4. *Body as Object Series*. 1975.
5. *Suspended Stone Series*. 1976 to present.
6. *Body as Object Series*. 1977.
7. *Displacement Piece*. 1975. Mildura Sculpturescape.
8. *Maquette*. 1974. CAS Exhibition, Hogarth Gallery.
9. *Razorback*. 1975.



Hagi Yaki



James Ashburn

Late in the 16th Century, Lord Mori Terumoto returned from a Japanese expedition to Korea, launched by Hideyoshi Toyotomi. Lord Mori brought back two Korean Potters and founded a tradition of *Hagi* Pottery that has lasted 260 years. The early *Hagi* ware was used exclusively for the tea ceremony and was not sold to the public. Beauty of form became the hallmark of *Hagi* ware, simple but elegant forms, subtle and beautiful glazes of milk, white, yellowish green and loquat (yellow plum) colour.

Hagi became the most important centre for ceramic production in Western Japan. It is based in Yamaguchi Prefecture with branches at Fukagawa and Matsumoto. There are also kilns working in related ware at Fujina and Rakuzan, near Matsue in Spimane Prefecture. *Rakuzan* ware or *Izumo* as it is also called, resembles *Hagi*. Koetsu, the kiln at Matsue was founded by *Hagi* Potters called in by Lord Matusdaira in 1677. Later they were to come under Kyoto influence. Other ware made at *Hagi* is *Oni Hagi* or *Devil Hagi* which has rough stones in its clay.

Hagi Potters of today continue to produce strong and elegant ware. Eizo Mima and Masanav Kaneta are highly regarded. They are also sculptors and participated in the *Hagi* International Sculpture Symposium. During the Symposium 15 Japanese and ten International sculptors carved 450 tons of granite into functional sculpture. Australian sculptor Anne Ferguson lived and worked there during the two-and-half months it took to complete the project. The site of the Sculpture Symposium is Shizuki Public Park.

The New Zealand-born potter Lex Dickson is spending about a year studying the traditional wood-fired *Hagi Yaki* with Goro Tamura. Not far from the *Hagi* kiln of Eizo Miwa are the three kilns of Shodo, Renkozan and Hosen. The highly appreciated traditional ware can be bought and viewed at *Takeo Saito* Gallery at 1-3 Gofukumachi in one of the delightful historic timber house-lined streets of Hagi City. Takeo Saito was manager of the *Hagi* International Sculpture Symposium and has a great knowledge of *Hagi Yaki* and a good command of English.

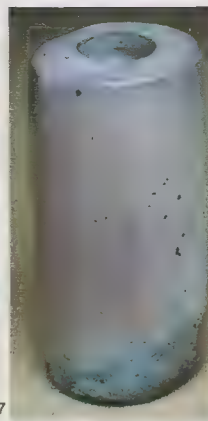
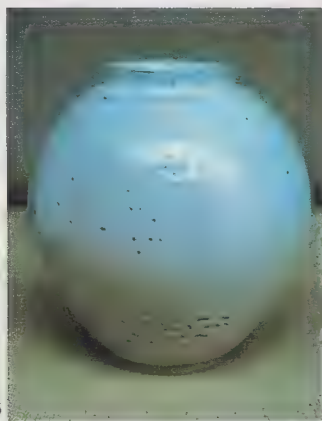
Hagi City played a very important role in the Meiji Restoration. The Shoin Shrine is dedicated to Shoin Yoshida, a thinker and teacher of the late Edo period who taught many of the leaders of the Meiji Restoration. Not far from the Shoin Shrine is the Tokojo temple built in 1691. It is the Mori family temple. The gate, main hall and bell tower are designated as 'Important Cultural Properties'. Five hundred stone lanterns dedicated by the Mori Samurai warriors are near by.

The feudal remains plus the natural beauty of the undulating hills and coastline of the region make *Hagi* City a must to visit. Six hours by Shinkansen (Bullet Train) from Tokyo to Ogori, then one hour and twenty minutes by bus to *Hagi* City. Accommodation both traditional and western is available at *Hagi* Honjin (tel 08382-2-5252). Push bikes are available for hire and are the best way to see the delights of *Hagi* City.

1. Hagi Potter Kaneta.
2. Hagi Potter Eizo Miwa.
3. Hagi Potter Okada.
4. Hagi jetty, Japan. The sculptors were Anne Ferguson (Aust), Miyauchi Hiroshi, Izumi Toshiaki and Gerald Höweler.
5. Eizo Miwa. *Hagi Yaki* vessel.
6. Eizo Miwa. *Hagi Yaki* platter.
7. Eizo Miwa. *Hagi Yaki* vessel.
8. Eizo's kiln.
9. Kaneta's *Hagi Yaki* wares.

Photos
James Ashburn





Primary Purposes

David Shaw's Furniture

Susan Malm

David Shaw approaches his work as furniture maker in a way that could be described as functional. I am not referring simply to the recognised need for utility, but to the combination of elements in the work; each necessary to the expression of a particular concept.

Initial planning for David's pieces takes the form of an imagined shape (or set of interrelated shapes) that are then drawn and developed on paper. All subsequent actions are controlled by this intended shape rather than by other restrictions. One can see the importance to Shaw of the acquisition of as many skills and as much historical and technical knowledge as possible. Shaw believes that designers and indeed, any craftspeople or artists, can draw upon an almost infinite number of natural and synthetic resources and that he or she should actively seek these resources. Such knowledge can become the stimulus for new works.

Shaw's current design work is a direct result of contact with the English furniture maker, Ashley Cartwright, and of a recent period of study and travel in Europe. This contact came about during Cartwright's period as artist-in-residence at the Tasmanian School of Art during 1981. At that time, Shaw was an industrial design student and had been primarily involved in the designing of prototypes for industry. Cartwright's residency, however, introduced Shaw to an approach to design with which he was unfamiliar. It was one he was strongly attracted to. Shaw then reacted against what he saw as a 'rough and ready' attitude to the design and manufacture of utilitarian objects in Australia.

This view has been enhanced by his time in England and Europe. When he attended the Ryecote School in Britain, he found the teaching stressed the importance of precision, an attitude reflecting both the lack of available supplies and the necessity of using appropriate materials. During this period, Shaw developed hand skills, many unaltered for centuries.

Through such experiences, a craftsman's mind becomes a receptacle/library for the gathering of information and techniques for later use. Craftworkers are in a position to translate age-old traditions into a modern visual and technological language.

That such traditional techniques are still in use also raises the question of craft as an anachronism. Many of today's crafts are based on techniques and attitudes long since superseded in the manufacturing sector and whilst respecting the traditions in his field, Shaw also recognises the need for craft to keep pace with technological advances.

Furniture makers must work within a framework set primarily by function and, to a lesser degree, tradition. However, within the guidelines of function are the possibilities for an infinite number of variations upon a basic theme. One can eliminate unnecessary considerations. By stripping, for example, the concept of 'table' back to its primary purpose, 'table' becomes a surface from which to eat. One may then approach the concept with fresh vision. For Shaw, this stripping has left him free to experiment with shapes not otherwise associated with furniture.

Shaw is reluctant to reject many of the 'slicker' techniques witnessed in his period overseas and these techniques are capable of providing the stimuli for design. Shaw's willingness to pick and choose is based on the belief the initial idea for the piece is the primary concern and that one must be prepared to utilise elements from as many sources as necessary in order to make the concept reality. He regards past developments and methods in furniture making as essential tools for the modern designer.

Elements from a wide variety of traditions and contemporary movements can readily be seen in Shaw's most recent works. Perhaps the most easily recognised demonstration of such influences is in the angular, wall-mounted mirrors. Whilst varying considerably in final appearance, each reflects facets of the complexities Shaw has come to relish. The mirror frames vary in shape from almost square to distinctly twisted rhomboid forms; the broadly pyramidal frames echoing the triangular form of head and shoulders. The mirrors demonstrate his willingness to utilise whatever technique or material he



regards as necessary to create the intended shape. Timbers are chosen for their colours and markings, rather than for their workability or so-called 'preciousness'. In these and other pieces, colour is used to delineate and separate shape and elements in the timber itself.

Shaw works regularly on commissions for interior design firms and this provides him with contact in another area of interest: designing for industry. This is an area often overlooked by craft furniture makers and understandably so. Australian manufacturers have been slow to adopt European attitudes to design. They seem prepared to stick to conservative and un-challenging designs through thick and thin, while a wealth of talented designers go by unnoticed.

However, when designers are in contact with industry, they have the opportunity to challenge and develop the expectations of the market-place. Equally, Shaw believes that it is important that craftspeople should not reject modern technology in favour of outmoded and often cruder methods. Craftspeople should take

advantage of methods which can eliminate time-consuming processes, leaving them free to concentrate on the ideas, rather than the execution. Consequently, Shaw has a great respect for such developments in furniture making. If one is aware of advancements, then one is in a position to reject or accept these technologies for the expression of specific concerns.

Shaw has recently won the second Tasmanian Furniture Design Competition with an entry based on simple modular units assembled from inexpensive materials. One can only hope that such designs (and competitions) will spark some interest from generally un-responsive manufacturers.

David Shaw, and other makers with him, is in a unique position to translate the traditions of his craft into modern terms and to make a contribution to the perception of the role of crafts in society.

Susan Malm graduated from the Tasmanian School of Art in ceramics. She is a contributor to **Craft Australia**.





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1. *Table*. Myrtle. 50 x 100 cms. Dove-tailed, mitred corners.

2. *Cabinet* (wall-mounted). Sugar Pine. 50 x 45 cms.

3. *Cabinet detail*.

4. *Table*. Myrtle and Celery-Top Pine. 50 x 100 cms.

5. *Mirror*. Painted. 30 x 30 cms.

6. *Mirror*. Black Heart Sassafras. 50 x 40 cms.

7. *Mirror* (free-standing). Tasmanian Myrtle and Celery-Top Pine.

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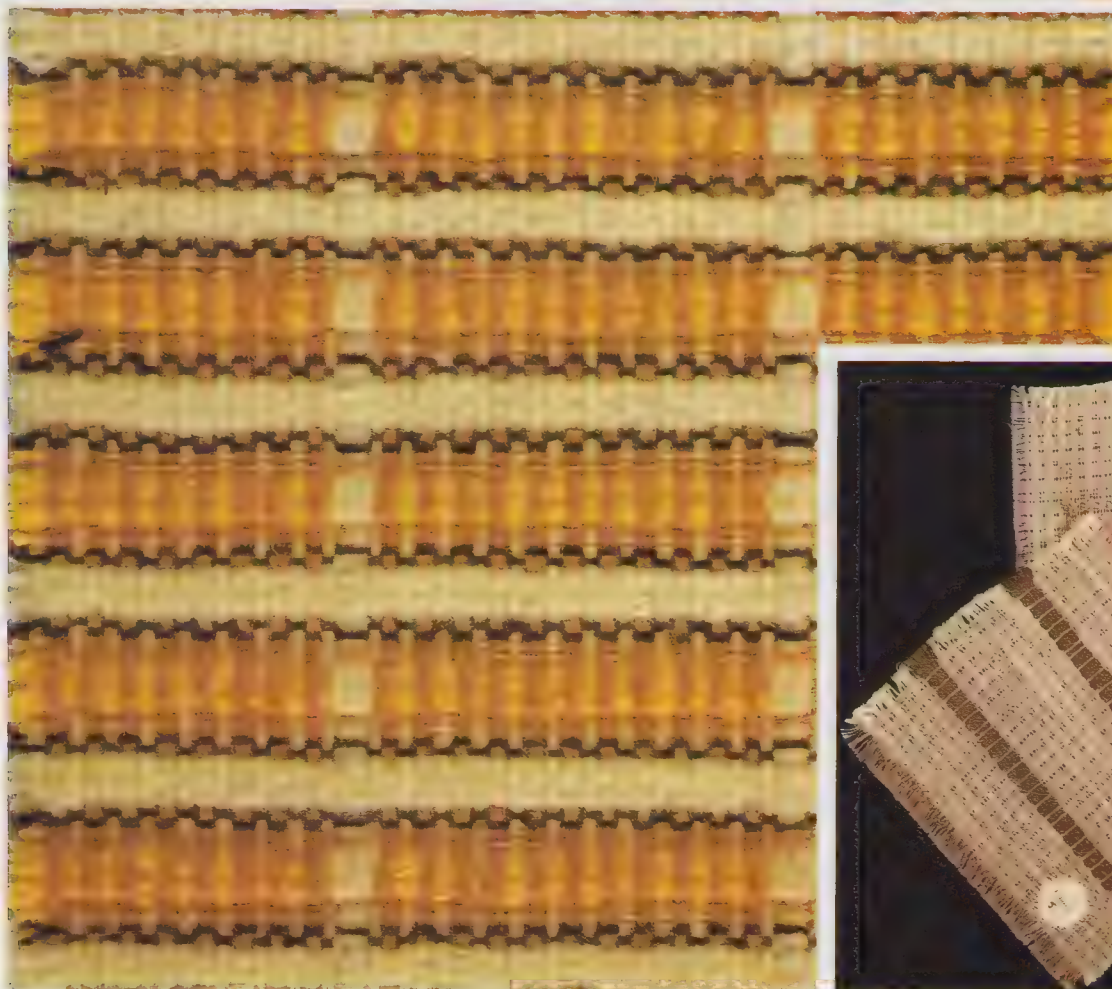
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HAND-WOVEN *Fabrics* from **ECLARTÉ**



eclarté was an Australian weaving studio born in wartime Australia in 1940 and perishing in the early 1960s. For two decades *eclarté* furnished fashion designers, department stores, interior designers and royalty with fine handwoven fabrics. John McPhee, curator of decorative arts at the Australian National Gallery recently recorded a talk given by Mollie Grove, one of the founders of *eclarté*. Ms Grove gave her talk as part of the Canberra School of Art's Art Forum series in April 1985.

The Beginnings

The subject of my talk is *eclarté*, a hand-weaving industry; and by way of introduction I shall tell you the origin of the word *eclarté*. *Clarte* is the French word for light; perspicacity; clarity, which meant 'enlightenment' to us and that's the word we wanted. By law we were not allowed to patent a dictionary word of any nationality and it was suggested that we add another letter. As 'E' stood for 'excellence' we added the prefix 'e' and *eclarté* was patented. The name was always written in lower case.

My partner in the venture was Catherine Hardress. In 1925 she had graduated in fine art at the Slade school, London University and when I met her she

was in charge of the fine arts section of Swinburne Technical College in Melbourne. She returned to London and found scope for her ability in the theatre, worked with Osborne Robinson, who was considered one of London's leading *décor* and costume designers at the time, and participated in many London theatre productions. She was eventually appointed designer at the Tunbridge Repertory Theatre in Kent.

I had completed an Applied Art Course at Swinburne and in 1935 joined Catherine in London where I enrolled at the London School of Arts and Crafts. The course included fabric printing, but textiles were not of particular interest to me at that time.

1. Fabric sample card, woollen furnishing fabric, c1958. Australian National Gallery.

2. University House, Canberra, furnishing fabric samples in cotton, 1954. Australian National Gallery.



After twelve months study in general craft, it was by sheer chance that weaving became part of my life. In a little country cottage where I was staying whilst on a holiday, there was an old handloom which I was invited to use. Almost dramatically my knowledge of texture and colour and a musical background clicked together with the rhythm of the shuttle.

On my return to London I left the London School and enrolled in a course with the Kensington Weavers who wove Scottish plaids and regalia for royalty etc. The work was meticulous and required great discipline, but was excellent training. After I gained my diploma with the Kensington Weavers I was apprenticed to a skilled continental weaver and also worked with an analytical chemist who was experimenting in textile dyes.

Catherine and I spent nearly five years overseas, shared a studio life and developed many mutual interests. On our way back to Australia we travelled through Norway and Sweden, Finland, Russia, Poland, Hungary and Greece, to see what the educational world, as well as the craft world was doing, for we were pledged to fulfil a teaching appointment on our return and to establish an art department in one of our private schools. I might mention here that whilst we were in Paris, before our journey home, we saw the Finnish display at the International Exposition in 1937, the focus of the entire display being a superb modern tapestry *The Flower Garden* by Margareta Ahlstedt-Willandt which won a Gold Medal at that exhibition. When we were in Helsinki, on our way back to Australia, we were privileged and delighted to meet the weaver of this lovely tapestry.

Back in Melbourne in August 1939, fulfilling our professional commitments, we trained two artists in our educational work and in our spare time prepared for a fabric exhibition, which was staged with the theatrical flair that was Catherine's forte.

This we held in the Venetian Court of the Hotel Australia and we exhibited tweeds, dress fabrics (from beach to evening wear), furnishing materials, floor rugs and accessories; many examples the result of

work done in England. Others were woven in a basement studio in Queen Street, Melbourne. The exhibition was opened on the 4th March 1940, by the then Prime Minister of Australia, Sir Robert Menzies and [it] was a successful venture. We won the acclamation of the press and the Prime Minister's great interest, and the Hotel Australia invited us to extend the exhibition for an extra week at its expense. So we were in business. It was *now* (riding on the crest of the wave) or *never*. *eclarté* was born, and, very much undercapitalised, we took the plunge.

The War Years

We trained weavers and progressed with a staff of ten in larger Melbourne premises, but these were the years of the war and there were many difficulties. We were declared a 'trade' by the Government, which meant being restricted to weaving tweeds only, in commercial lengths, and prices being dictated by the Prices Commission. It was not as remunerative as we would have wished, but it was stimulating and we had quite a degree of success for our fabrics were finding their way into top grade stores, both in Australia and overseas.

After the War

We discovered, to our horror, that our Melbourne representative had been hard at work having our designs copied by a Geelong mill. He sent books of his machine-made samples around the trade and when asked for *eclarté* notified his clients that we were no longer in business. The woollen mills in Geelong also made it their business to deprive us of woollen yarn, even though the Government tried to intervene, hoping that we would become a rehabilitation centre for returned soldiers. In a country which produced the finest fleece in the world, we were forced to import yarn from England.

The Dandenong Studio

In 1951 we moved to our own building in Dandenong (then a small country town eighteen miles out of Melbourne). Sir Robert Menzies opened the new



building and, as ever gave us his support. We were also encouraged by the Wool Bureau and the Institute of Management, who frequently brought overseas visitors to the Industry. They were interested both in our product and our method of management. Quoted in **The Sun** on 21st December 1951 Catherine Hardress said of the *eclarté* approach to management, 'We feel we have made a success of a social experiment in human behaviour and friendliness. People can work and be happy at the same time. There is still room in this modern age for the joy and satisfaction of craftsmanship and creative work in happy surroundings. And it can be made to pay. We have proved it. It could be extended to other parts of Australia. I hope it will be.'

As **The Age** observed on 27th September 1952, there were rewards: 'As soon as they [the employees] join Miss Hardress and Miss Grove, they begin to learn that the atmosphere is different from that of other factories. They become workers of a team, working not as labourers, or craftsmen, but as artists ... for *eclarté* accepts only craftsmen and aims to train artists.'

We eventually trained a staff of 30 craftsmen. These were years of hard work but gratifying success.

Our tweeds were in demand. Princess Elizabeth was sent *eclarté* tweed as a gift from the Country Women's Association on the occasion of her twenty-first birthday. Then, as Queen, she chose a length of *eclarté* from samples sent to her by the Wool Bureau at her request. Prince Philip also chose *eclarté* for himself and the two younger princes. For Princess Alexandra's visit to Australia, the Wool Bureau ordered rugs both for her and Princess Marina. We were told that at the Victorian Football League's Final, Princess Alexandra opened her rug and spread it over her knees, so at least it did not go into moth balls! We also wove rugs to match the upholstery of all the TAA Royal planes on the Queen's visit. Other celebrities to visit our industry and purchase tweeds were Sir Laurence and Lady Olivier.

We were invited by the Wool Bureau to arrange a working display at the Royal Agricultural Society Show. (The Governor of Victoria, Sir Winston Dugan, ordered a dressing gown length as a gift to the Premier, Mr Dunstan, and David Jones purchased the complete exhibit.) The department stores Henry Bucks, Buckleys, Myers and Georges in Melbourne, and David Jones in Sydney were opening each season with *eclarté* sports jackets for men.

The press and radio were generous in their coverage of every success we achieved. Naturally this gave us the publicity we needed and the interest in our work appeared to be genuine.

By now, with the war restrictions behind us, we were developing furnishing fabrics. This gave us great scope and stimulation. It was during this time that we came into close contact with architects, Roy Grounds, Robin Boyd, Stephenson & Turner, Bates, Smart & McCutcheon, and, to our great delight, the craftsman and artist, Fred Ward. Homes were being designed with great areas of glass and clients were bewildered. Catherine Hardress was well qualified to cope with this situation. She was very sensitive to colour and texture and we found ourselves devoting much time to designing for the individual client, be it a lounge room or a complete office building.

Fred Ward was designing beautiful and functional furniture for many of Canberra's new buildings and it was our privilege to be called in to work with him. His furniture will remain as a constant reminder to Canberra people of his art and skill. We had sufficient work to keep us constantly occupied and did not officially export, although some of our fabrics found their way to England, New York and the salons of Paris. In 1951 the Australian Government had purchased *eclarté* fabric to set up a pavilion at the New York Fair which gave us good connections overseas.

During this period furnishing orders we executed included: in Melbourne, Ormond and St Hilda's Colleges, University of Melbourne (curtains and divan covers), Faculty of Commerce (curtains), Malvern Theatre (wall panels).

The Malvern Theatre was a challenge for it was an acoustic problem. The Metro was the first theatre to adopt the new wide screen. An architect specialising in acoustics called us in and it was agreed that the great slabs of concrete between wall pillars be cut back and heavy woollen fabric be inserted. We wove this fabric. I visited the theatre recently and was amazed to find this fabric still doing its job after all of forty years.

[Some further commissions:] in Adelaide, Foyer of Adelaide University (curtains), in Canberra, The Academy of Science (upholstery), University House (upholstery, curtains and divan covers), The Australian Club (curtains), The Prime Minister's Suite at Parliament House (curtains).

Also in Melbourne, ANZ Bank (curtains), John Batman Motel (curtains and divan covers for suites), Shell Building (upholstery for executive floor), Colonial Mutual Life Insurance (curtains for executive floor).

1. Gold medal winning *eclarté* fabric and fashion Australian Wool Bureau Fashion Awards, 1960. Australian National Gallery.
2. Exhibition installation, Hotel Australia, Melbourne, March 1940. Australian National Gallery.
3. Prime Minister Robert Menzies opening the Dandenong factory, 1951. Australian National Gallery.
4. The Australian Academy of Science, Canberra, *eclarté* upholstery fabric in Fellows Room, 1959. Australian National Gallery.
5. The Australian Academy of Science, Canberra, *eclarté* upholstery fabric in Lecture Theatre, 1959. Australian National Gallery.
6. *eclarté* weavers at work on tufted floor rug, for Reserve Bank, Sydney, c1962. Australian National Gallery.
7. Made in Australia Council award winning window display in Victorian Tourist Bureau, Melbourne, Australian National Gallery.



In a Wool Bureau Radio Service Pamphlet in 1963 there is a report on the Colonial Mutual Life curtains, from which I shall read excerpts:

An unusual story lies behind the selection of pure wool curtains for the new office building of the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society Ltd, in Melbourne. The Society has fitted out one complete floor of the new building with 'hessian-weave' curtains of fully hand-made pure wool fabric. The makers are Miss Catherine Hardress and Miss Edith Grove who not only wove the fabric on specially adapted hand looms, but hand-carded, hand-spun and hand-dyed the wool.

To make the special 'hessian-weave' fabric for the CML Building, they selected and blended about two hundred and fifty pounds of crossbred wool. The five hundred yards of fabric took six weeks to hand-loom, but with finishing and hanging, it was a three-months project.

Speaking about the 'hessian-weave' they developed, Miss Hardress said that she considered it a new conception in window fabric weave. Not only did it have the heat and sound insulating and fire-resistant properties of wool, plus wool's superior texture and drape, but its open weave allowed in light while restricting heat from the sun.

The 'hessian-weave' took both women about two years to develop, and necessitated special adaptations to their hand looms.

After a period of about ten years we again came into conflict with the woollen mills. The 'finishing' process of our material which was the washing of the fabric, could only be done by the mills and in large quantities which was an accumulation of around five hundred yards. It almost appeared that the mills were trying to obstruct our progress by the difficulties they implanted.

At the same time we were experiencing our first staff problems. Dandenong had become a highly mechanised factory area. Our young employees, trained from school years, were now marrying, having families and building houses. Our wages were good but we could not compete with overtime rates offered by the factories.

Heathcote

In 1957 we sold our building in Dandenong and went to a small country village, Heathcote. Before we began production here we stored some of our equipment and went abroad to see for ourselves how out of fashion or up to date *eclairé* was. We were delighted to find that our work and methods were as modern, and as good as and often better than those anywhere else in the world. Upon our return in 1958 we changed our complete production over to furnishings, which was the work which had always interested us most for it

was creative. A linen firm supplied us with linen yarn to our specifications. We purchased a sample-sized model spinning plant for our woollen yarn and improvised with two hotel soup vats to do both fleece and skein dyeing. Most furnishing fabrics needed no finishing. When they did we washed them in the bath and dried them on rollers in the sun or before an open fire. Even the domestic iron became worth its weight in gold! (Thirty-yard rolls of heavy textures, we must have been MAD!)

One thing the mills succeeded in doing was to force us to use our resourcefulness and ingenuity and this probably led us to the production of our best work.

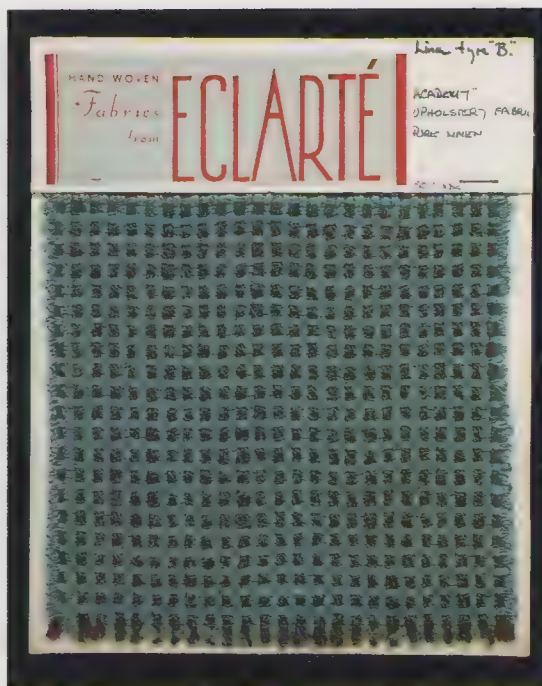
Our Downfall

Finally we were invited to prepare samples for the Reserve Bank in Sydney, a truly inspiring commission. We lived to remember a leading Melbourne business man's comment as to whether this would be our end! It was.

We had never been asked to tender for a job, but had been contracted to perform on our ability and our merit as artists and craftsmen, and it was so with the Reserve Bank in Sydney. Dr. Coombs saw our work in Canberra and declared 'this is what we want'. He did want an Australian product, but to justify his choice the bank sent a representative overseas to see if our samples could be bettered. We were still the chosen weavers, but after that the contract was handed over to the Board of Works. All the delays, imaginable and unimaginable, took place and we were thwarted from the beginning. Being a two year contract we were able to take private orders as well and this kept us afloat financially. When the order was completed to the satisfaction of the Reserve Bank, the Board of Works instructed us to prepare material for the Melbourne Bank Branch, based on the same fabrics as Sydney. This would flow to all other States and assure our future. Most of the fabrics were wool and it was stipulated that the yarn be composed of a blend of English, New Zealand, South African and Australian fleeces. A written order from the Board of Works was necessary before embarking on such a project. We were also advised that there was a time limit of six months, so it was necessary to cancel all private orders and devote our time fully to the Bank order. As time was running out we ordered the fleece although no official order had arrived.

We waited three months with looms idle, bales of fleece and staff retained. The order never arrived and we were never notified that the material had been supplied by a Melbourne warehouse. We were always under-capitalised and could not take this set-back.

So in 1962 we had no option but to accept defeat and liquidate. We were artists, not traders, but we made many friends and loved our work and its challenge.



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1. Fabric sample card, open-weave cotton furnishing fabric, c1958. Australian National Gallery.
2. Fabric sample card, cotton and wool furnishing fabric, c1958. Australian National Gallery.
3. Fabric sample card, Academy linen furnishing fabric in eucalyptus blue, 1959. Australian National Gallery.
4. Australian Wool Bureau Fashion Award, gold medal winning fabric in 1/ cotton and 2/ wool, 1960. Australian National Gallery.
5. Fabric sample cards, cotton and rayon furnishing fabrics for John Batman Motor Inn, Melbourne, 1962. Australian National Gallery.
6. Reserve Bank, Sydney with upholstery fabric and floor rug by eclarté, c1962. Australian National Gallery.

Thoughts into Flesh

Catherine Truman and Anne Van Sebille

Garry Benson



In *Ways of Seeing* John Berger discussed the role of art as an indication of status and wealth.

In *Thoughts into Flesh* Cathy Truman and Anne Van Sebille delve into the relationship between jewellery (art) and the wearer (the status seeker). In a complex and exciting development, these two artists have pushed fine art frontiers in jewellery forward into a new and ominous shape. Jewellery *per se* may never be the same again.

The exhibition is the fruition of a working relationship which went on for over a year. Since the two jewellers already shared a workshop, it seemed more than appropriate that they should share an exhibition. They already shared the same philosophy, a philosophy which would be regarded as blasphemy by most other jewellers. This included the perceived need for them to 'shake off conventional restrictions of their craft, the use of precious metals, the display in hushed galleries in glass cases'. They wanted to explore new ways in which their work could tap the intimate relationship between scale and human form. This also meant the use of alternative materials, rubber, textiles, acetate, paint and nylon, that helped to bring their work closer to sculptural conceptions. It also made some of the work unwearable as jewellery!

The exhibition is the work of two individuals, who thought 'that at one early stage we were going to have one and the same exhibition, and then things sort of peeled off . . . Our concerns peeled off, and when we started to pick up on what each of us was doing we then found ourselves deviating'. It's only fair then, to start with the ideas of each individual.

'Woman like man is her body, but her body is something other than herself.' Simone de Beauvoir.

Catherine Truman read a lot of general history and researched an enormous amount into women's roles in agriculture and economics.

'It was the way that they were tied up in their biological role too', said Cathy. 'Certain images came to mind when I was doing that research, and remained with me while I was doing my work. I didn't translate them literally, as they were just impressions I had, and images that formed during that reading.'

It was also involved in the experimentation Cathy was undertaking with a lot of different materials that she'd never used before. The images and the materials bound together to form the core of the exhibition. It meant that Cathy was trying to make the point that women were bound to their biological roles, in terms of producing other people.

'I didn't take it as a negative reaction, in fact, I took it as a positive reaction. I really did feel that we were breaking new ground in terms of the jewellery and the jewellery display, because the pieces became part of a sculpture. Most jewellers who are at present working in Australia haven't even broken through that barrier. They're still concerned with presenting a piece of jewellery within a case, as a focus. I was more concerned with an image, almost an environmental thing.'

From behind you look just like me.

A Jewish inmate of a concentration camp, describing the last sight of her brother going to his death in her borrowed shirt and boots:

'From behind, he looked just like me.'

In 1977, you died: your power, personality, vibrance collapsed into a trunkful of clothes and photos.

I dream of you in a silk shirt, always walking away and always so much younger.

But my body looks more like yours every day.

Anne Van Sebille.

Anne Van Sebille's work came about from personal ideas, memories and attitudes:

'I'd been thinking a lot and feeling a lot about the sort of ways in which women have an awful lot to thank technology for. In terms of offering us new choices and new ways of living. I was thinking about physically, in terms of what technology has done for their bodies: improved obstetrics care, gynaecological help that women have, contraception, help for women who are infertile. That sort of technology, while giving us all these new choices, also has the potential to control us in new and really what I would consider quite sinister ways. And I see the possibilities of women becoming almost victims of this new technology.'

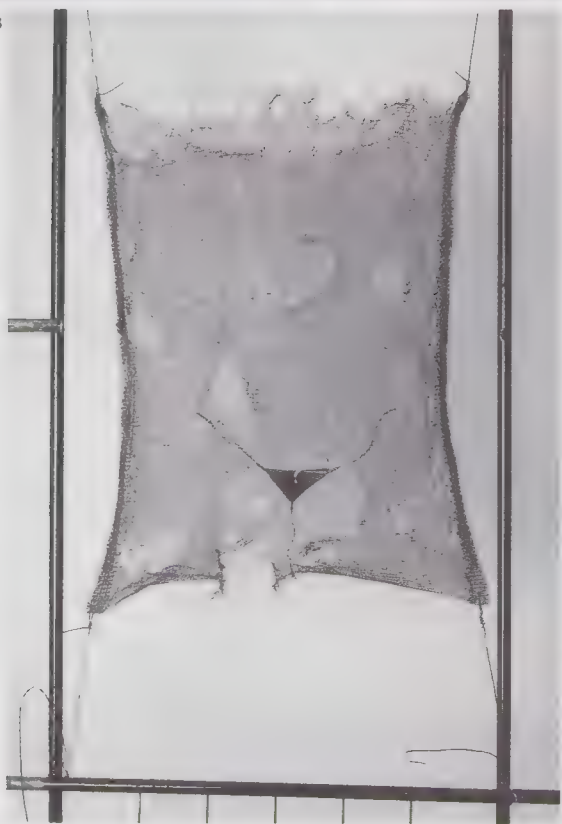
So the work really grew out of a sense of ambivalence about technology, with a juxtaposition of cold, technological shapes and materials against vulnerable-looking, translucent, fleshy sort of forms. Anne used a lot of the imagery from technology, graphs, wriggly lines and polished tubes. With the display, it became a very jeweller-like statement when she put a brooch against a manufactured human form. The relationship of jewellery to the human form became a new experience.

One display caused a lot of confusion: 'We actually had a lot of people who were very confused about how

1. 2. Catherine Truman (right) and Anne Van Sebille (left). *Thoughts Into Flesh*, Jam Factory Bullring, Adelaide Festival. March 1984.
3. Catherine Truman. *Brooch on Mesh Bag*. Red gum, sterling silver, nylon-coated steel tracer wire, nylon thread, paint. Bag: Brass mesh 20 x 13 cms. Brooch: Triangular brooch with 3 leader hooks. Wood section 2 x 1 cms.
4. Catherine Truman. *Series of 3 brooches*. Nylon-coated steel, tracer wire, copper, brass, sterling silver, nylon thread and paint (in all). 10 x 2.5 cms.
5. Catherine Truman. *No longer content with gardens brooch. Shakudo*, 24ct gold, copper, brass, sterling silver, paint, nylon thread, nylon-coated steel tracer wire. Metal section 6 x 5 cms. Victorian State Craft Collection.



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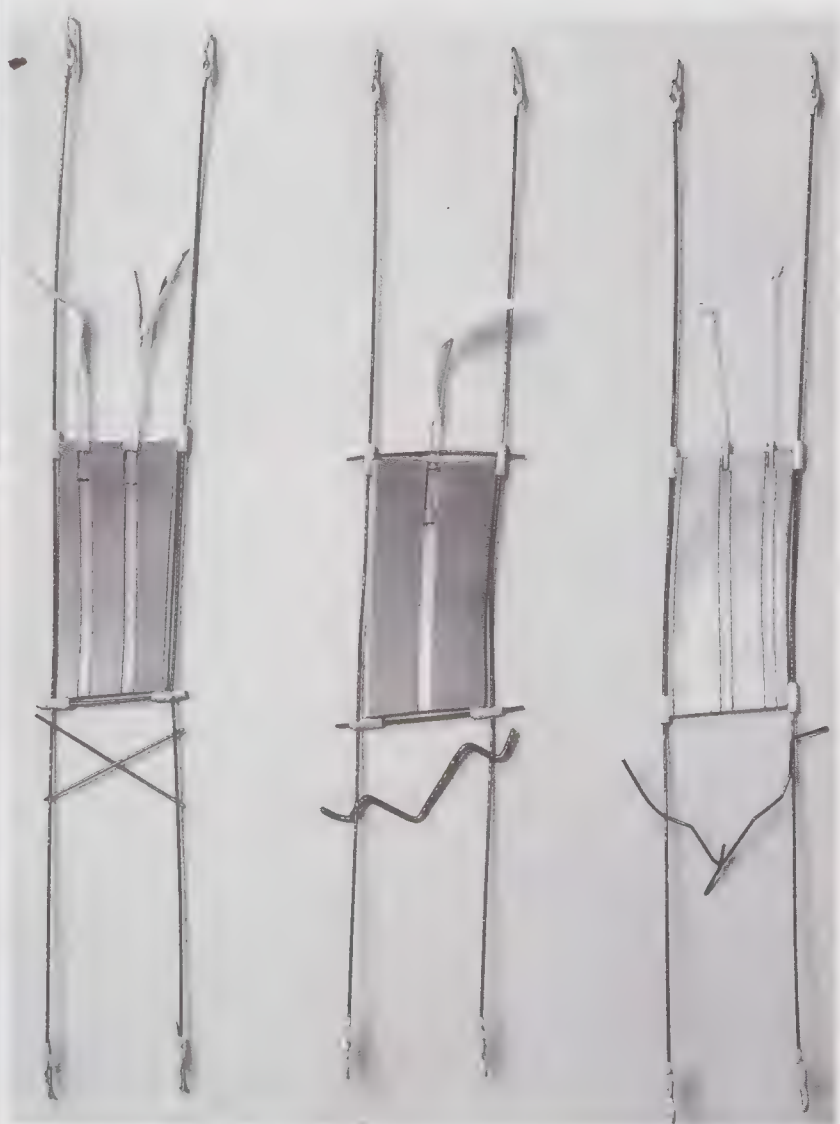
one was going to manage to wear a brooch on one's pubis. Wouldn't it be very uncomfortable when you sat down?'

The kind of criticism they received was not 'This stuff is unwearable!' but was mainly to do with the way they displayed it. A lot of people felt that the display actually completely dominated the jewellery. Did this bother them?

Anne said, 'It didn't really bother us, because we felt that that was what we wanted. We wanted the pieces not to be recognisable as jewellery straight away. As far as I'm concerned, that worked well for both of us.'

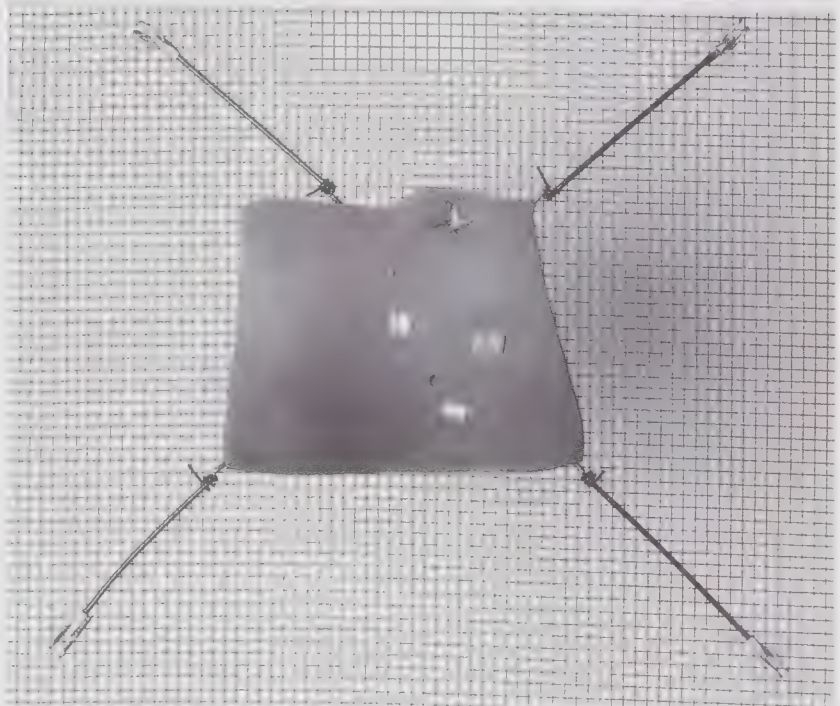
The exhibition was displayed at The Jam Factory in Adelaide during the 1984 Adelaide Arts Festival and at the Blackwood Street Gallery in Melbourne's Meat Market (March 26 — April 15). It was assisted by the South Australian Department of the Arts and the Crafts Board of the Australia Council.

Garry Benson is a well-known tapestry weaver and crafts journalist.

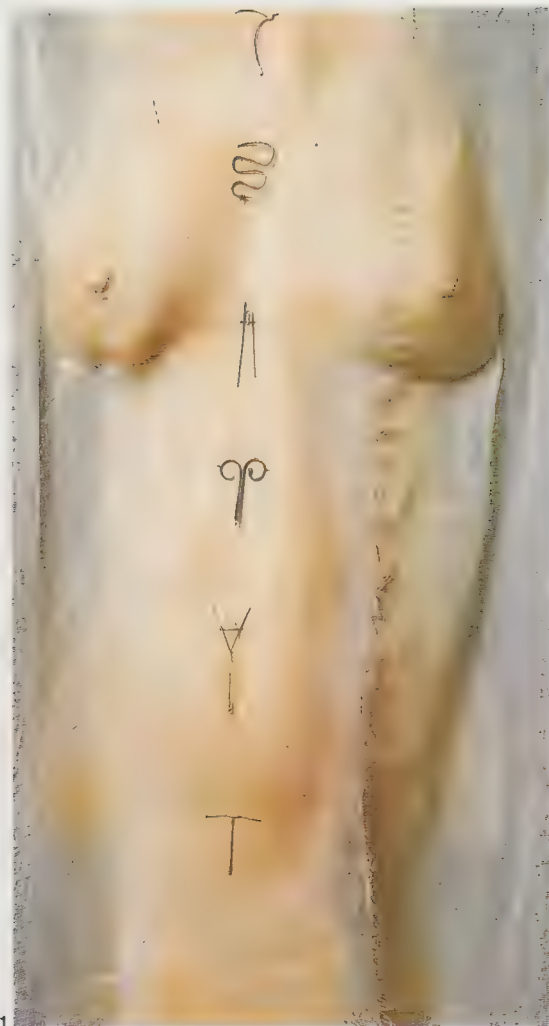


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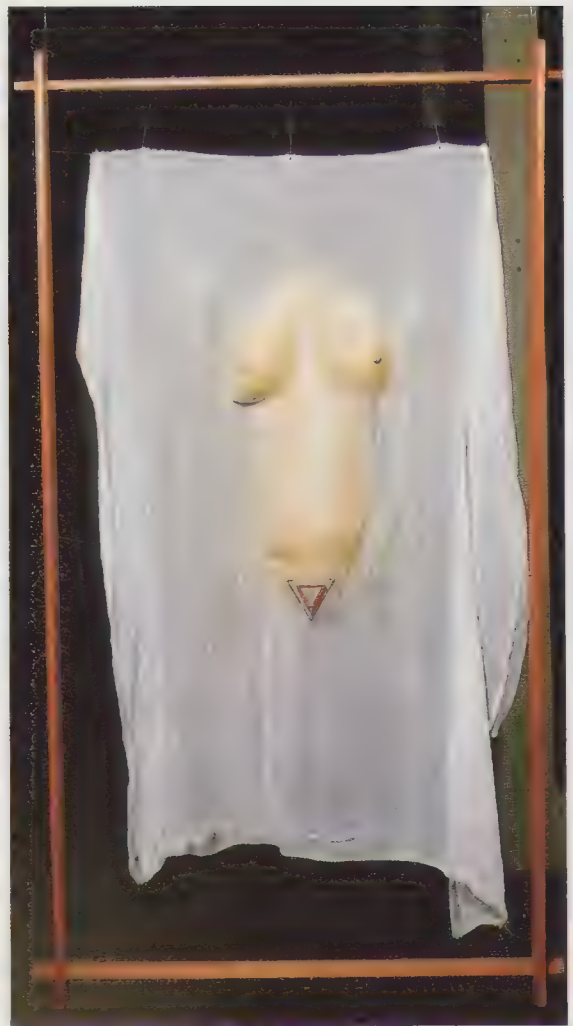
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Photos by Michal Kluvanek.



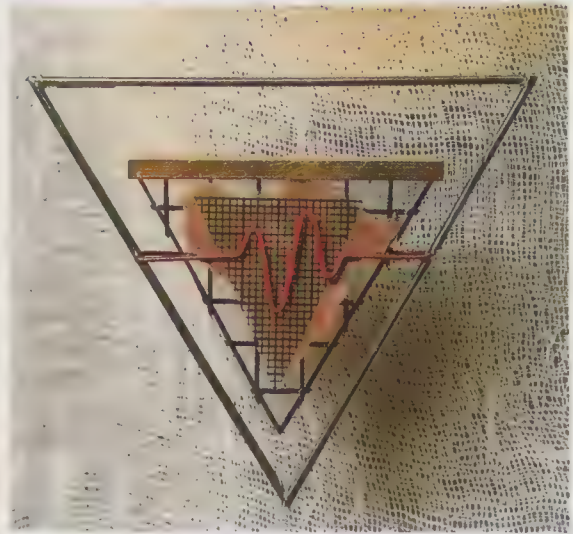
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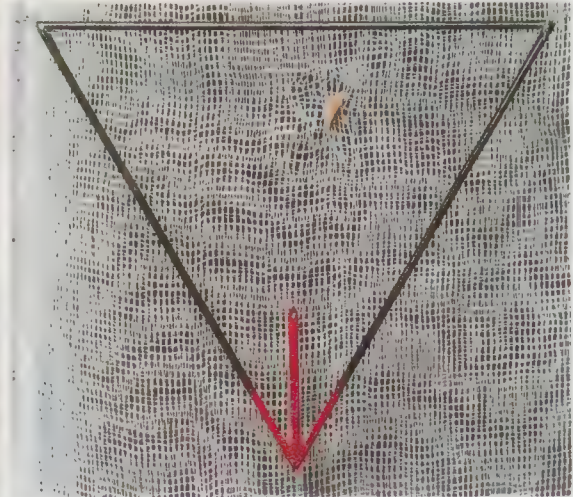
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1. Catherine Truman.
Brooch. Brass mesh,
copper, brass,
sterling silver, nylon-
coated steel tracer
wire, nylon thread,
paint. Metal section
2 x 3 cms.

2. Catherine Truman.
*Brooch on Mesh
Bag*. Brass, copper,
sterling silver, nylon
thread, paint, nylon-
coated steel tracer
wire. Bag: Brass
mesh 20 x 13 cms.
Brooch: Triangular
brooch with 3 leader
hooks. Metal section
1.5 x 1.5 cms.

3. Anne Van Sebille.
PAP. Gauze, latex,
steel, brass, rubber,
acetate, lettraset,
paint, paper.

4. Anne Van Sebille.
Red Point I. Steel,
paint.

5. Anne Van Sebille.
Red Point II. Steel,
paint.

CLOTHES & CLAY

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Other Forms

Julie Montgarrett

Sue Forster

At first Julie Montgarrett's floating 'shadows' at the Meat Market's recent 'Sculptors as Craftsmen' exhibition made me feel as though I had just entered an apocalyptic vision, a post-holocaust world inhabited by ghosts. Barely three-dimensional, the gently twisting monochromatic figures that made up the installation conveyed a mass of visual contradictions.

Strongly defined faces and tensed shoulders flowed into amorphous, boneless bodies, grotesquely distorted by contrast to their more classical facial features. Each 'shadow's' distant gaze reflected its own isolation within the group: an isolation further compounded by the conflicting light sources and dramatic use of *chiaroscuro* to emphasise the body's flight through space. Within the installation there existed no certainty of form, gender or cultural reference. Even the contrasting use of light and shade formed a visual paradox by also reuniting the figures through tonal pattern. This suggested an apparent bodily substance which the work lacked three-dimensionally.

This sense of ambiguity and concern with movement in space has been a major focus within Julie Montgarrett's textile work since 1981. Whilst the presentation of her ideas may have changed over the years, they are linked through her drawings.

Perhaps the biggest change in direction came in 1980 when Julie enrolled in a graduate diploma course in embroidery at RMIT in Melbourne. Prior to that, she had taught for three years as a Secondary Art/Craft Teacher for the Education Department of Victoria and as a tutor for the Benalla Regional Art Gallery and Learning Exchange. These years spent living in various country regions of Victoria were reflected in the landscape imagery of the ten fabric panels she produced for an exhibition at the Benalla Art Gallery in 1979. Her aim was 'to solve problems involved in manipulating the found fabrics in order to emulate an open light filled space'.

During 1980 Julie experimented with the layering of dyed and printed fabrics to create the illusion of

reflections on glass for a series based on window imagery. Her initial concern with figurative imagery gave way to a greater interest in abstracted colour effects. Many of the embroideries employed mixed media such as photographs, with the use of stitching being the last unifying element. She saw the stitch as being more than a drawn mark that should not be used in the same way. Fundamental to the window pieces was a concern with space: an emotive space for capturing visions that reflected inwards as well as projecting outward.

By 1981 Julie was employed by RMIT as a teacher of Drawing and Design Development. Her own work was moving towards the construction of three-dimensional multi-media structures, later defined as 'towers'. In these, the stitch as a medium for conveying line and direction is in part replaced by sticks, further emphasising the special nature of the use of stitch as 'mark making'. Like all her work, these pieces became personal metaphors for her emotional response to a current situation: the mood varies widely from *Dreamless Ceiling*, incorporating a dark stitched and gashed background sprinkled with broken mirror glass and shrivelled magpie's feet; to the brighter constructions based around canopy and flag shapes with syncopated colour rhythms to draw the eye around the work. The fabric bindings and jagged pennants are also suggestive of kites and fairground stalls or are intended to simply convey the excitement of life.

The later life-size 'shadows' might initially appear to be a diversion from the earlier work. However, they were first conceived in 1982 during an exhibition of the 'towers' at the Blackwood Gallery in Melbourne. At that stage Julie had intended to make four brightly coloured, abstract, torn fabric shadows of figures to accompany the 'towers', creating a visual link across the floors and up the walls of the gallery.

But it wasn't until she started work on an exhibition during a residency in Darwin in 1983 that the 'shadows' began to take form. At one level they were to represent one way of describing space. A sense of place was to be conveyed by indicating the surface texture of the landscape the shadows fell on and this led to experiments in stitched surfaces.

These experiments were temporarily set aside to re-emerge finally, after a three year gestation period, as

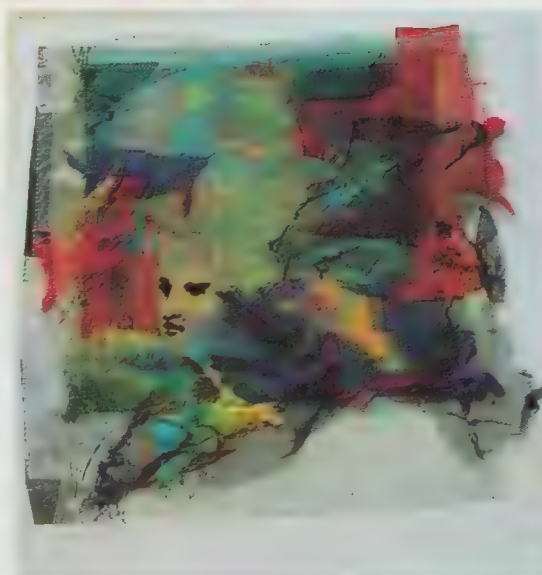


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Nothing but Memory, Place and Desire at the 1984 Tamworth National Fibre Exhibition. A sketchbook diary containing quick gestural studies made during a recent European trip had added substance to her understanding of the figures, although this first group of three were still firmly anchored to the wall rather than free hanging in space. Like the Meat Market installation *Other Forms*, they were executed in canvas with graphite markings to highlight shadow and movement. The edges of the canvas were torn, reflecting the initial concept at the Blackwood Gallery and creating a further visual ambiguity of formlessness within form. The 'shadows' had become more than the mere cast of a body blocking out light: they reiterated the three Muses of ancient Greece with a ghostly life and vivacity of their own. Their title reflects a line from Impact Theatre's play 'A Place in Europe'.

Other Forms develops the ideas behind *Nothing but Memory, Place and Desire*. The revolving two-sided figures are glued around wooden, slatted supports, resulting in a slightly raised surface. The ambiguity of detail is a deliberate attempt to interpret the way we see, as the eye is unable to record everything in the same focus. Hence a hand or face may be in sharp focus compared to the legs which are moving away from the viewer. The figures are realistic enough to be recognisable but sufficiently abstracted to convey other meanings and make the viewer participate in the experience.

The necessity for the use of fibre and textiles becomes increasingly selective in Julie's most recent work, the canvas used in *Other Forms* adding a textural quality where graphite marks and torn edges are incorporated into the work. She is disinterested in labels and technique, except as a means of conveying the concept behind the work and the use of decoration which would distract from the conceptual focus. Her work has been described over the years by Nola



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1. *Nothing but Memory, Place and Desire*. Paradox is common confusion. Mixed media, drawing. 1984. Tamworth Fibre Collection.
2. *No Time to Begin*. 101 x 112 cms. Polychrome print on cotton net. 1981.
3. *Thought Rise*. 122 x 101 cms. Polychrome print on cotton net. Mixed media, drawing.

Overleaf: *Other Forms*. Life-size double-sided canvas figures. Mixed media, drawing.

Anderson as 'wilful abandon in terms of the more traditional fibre arts' and by Tony Dyer as 'a stimulus to fibre craftspeople to become more open minded and then divergent in future endeavours'. Jenny Zimmer recognised an essential quality in Julie's work when she wrote 'Although exceedingly raw, the final results are ephemeral, too delicate to touch'. *Other Forms* reminded me of the analogy of the artist as a twentieth century explorer of the mind, seeking to reconcile past and future into a shifting and unstable present. The installation creates its own illusive reality, its component figures flickering like candles in the wind, dream-like and transient.

Sue Forster is a journalist and craftworker and the former Editor of the Crafts Council of NSW publication: *Crafts NSW*.





Tapestry Sells Carpet

Allison Wiseman

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop was recently commissioned to weave three tapestries, not so unusual in itself except the tapestries were used in a national advertising campaign for carpeting.

Advertising isn't really a lucrative market for this sort of work, even potentially, but it is an interesting option.

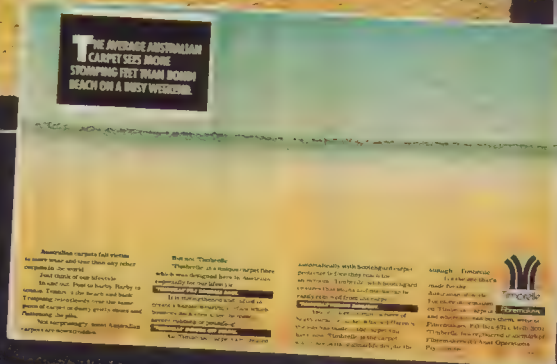
The tapestries titled *Mallee Dust Storm*, *Bondi Beach* and *Ayers Rock* were commissioned by an advertising firm to promote the Fibremakers range of carpet fibres.

The tapestries were woven in wool by Sue Batten, whose works include a tapestry of a Roger Kemp painting that has hung in the Victorian National Gallery. Usually, however, she collaborates with other artist/weavers from the workshop. She has been with the workshop now for five years.

This isn't the sort of project that The Victorian Tapestry Workshop usually takes on. Their work is generally not so commercial and physically of a much larger scale. The three works Sue wove were approximately 30cm x 40cm. Previous tapestry buyers have included banks, art galleries and government departments. 'It's not the sort of work we're known for', said Sue Walker of The Victorian Tapestry Workshop 'but we're very open minded'.

The workshop received the commission through advertising art director Linda Thompson, who is now with Ogilvy and Mather Advertising. Ms. Thompson knew of the workshop through a commission given to them by another agency. The workshop is conveniently located close to the agency and their window displays caught her eye. But she admits tapestries weren't her first choice for the layout. 'I guess it was a process of natural progression. I had experimented with various mediums, when we first did the roughs and presented them to the client, we were thinking of commissioning painters, then we thought it might be more interesting to have the artwork looking like carpet.'

The agency had an idea of what they wanted and presented it to the workshop, where it was interpreted and woven by Sue Batten. There were problems on both sides. 'Although Linda was enthusiastic, she



wasn't aware of the limitations of the medium', Sue said. Texture was a major consideration, a successful balance was achieved between a rough carpet-like look and a professional finish that highlighted the subtle use of colour in the works.

Linda Thompson also found unforeseen problems with colour reproduction. 'It seemed difficult coping with magazine reproduction of colours. I guess most tapestries are done for display purposes but we had to do this so that the colours would not be lost when the work was reproduced. Of course we didn't realise this at first, invariably you find these things out later.'

When the layout was complete parts of the tapestries were obscured by print. However, Sue Batten said that she went into the project knowing this. 'It's purely an aesthetic concern. I entered into it in the spirit of it being another use for tapestry.'

The success of the campaign is unclear, because of the nature of the product. The advertisements featured in magazines such as *House and Garden*, *Home Beautiful* and *Women's Weekly* but according to Ms. Thompson, 'It wasn't a campaign designed specifically to sell square metres of carpet. It was designed to promote a range of fibres and fibre treatments to retailers and consumers, rather than one type of carpet. It would be difficult to gauge how successful the campaign was.'

All agreed, however, that the project itself was a success. Sue Batten admitted that she found it interesting. 'We'd never worked with textural qualities this way before and I was pleased with the results.'

Linda Thompson would consider using other craft work again. 'I feel', she continued, 'people often think in terms of illustrators and painters, but after the success of this project

Allison Wiseman is a Sydney freelance journalist.



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1 Victorian Tapestry Workshop, Bondi Beach. Woven by Sue Batten. Photo Adrian Hall.

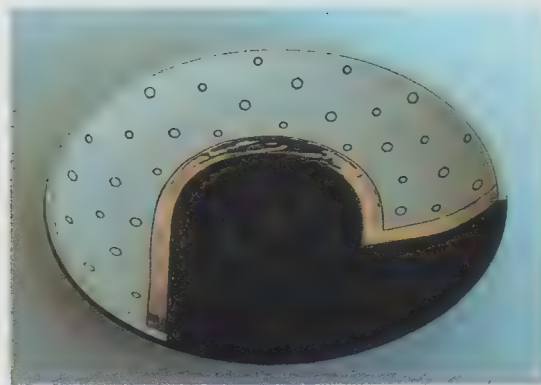
2 The advertisement prepared by Linda Thompson.

3 Ayers Rock. Photo Adrian Hall.

4 Mallee Dust Storm. Photo Adrian Hall.



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Queensland Potters 1984

Glenn R. Cooke

Nineteen eighty four produced some significant exhibitions of Queensland potters in Brisbane but it also saw the closure of two major craft exhibition spaces. After more than two years of high quality exhibitions, the Lyrebird Gallery closed down and the Crafts Council of Queensland decided to relinquish its gallery and concentrate on promoting crafts. Victor Mace Fine Arts Gallery remains the only exhibiting gallery in Brisbane that makes no distinction between arts and crafts and while Sandra Black and Chris Sanders exhibited, no Queensland potters appeared there. As a result, a review of the exhibits by Brisbane potters is essentially a review of the only other venue, the Queensland Potter's Association Gallery.

The year there began with a showing of the Directional Group, a collection of local potters formed five years ago that includes Jo Beard, Nina Summers, Ruth Benson, Yvonne Bowman, Beth Verschoyle, Sue Page, Jim Penhaligon, Janet Crompton and Meg Crompton. The exhibition 'Plaques, platters and other things' was varied, demonstrating the wide interests of the members. Among the most accomplished of this generally interesting group were Ruth Benson who displayed a series of low relief wall panels, Nina Summers with her *saggar* firing techniques while Yvonne Bowman produced monolithic slab built forms and delicate fungoid porcelain shapes.

The Association's support for regional representation was evident throughout the year with exhibits from the Wide Bay Potters (Gladstone) Tony Hutchison and Beverley Bloxham's joint exhibition (Toowoomba) and Stephen Day (also from Toowoomba). Stephen Day's exhibition in September clearly demonstrated the influence of both Carl and Phillip McConnell in the various styles of oriental pottery. Stephen's work, while competent in execution, has a long way to go before it equals the refinement of the McConnells. Connie Hoedt, with her series of *Microcosms* and Lesley Hawkins with shell-form plates represented Townsville in the October group exhibition.

The most accomplished exhibitions this year were by three women potters, Lynne McDowell, Stephanie Outridge and Johanna de Maine. Lynne McDowell's exhibition 'Marks' during June was significant as it represented a stylistic breakthrough. The top surfaces of the pots were developed into significant decorative areas when she found she could support these large surfaces by using double-walled vessels. The external walls were 'glazed' with a manganese and copper oxide metallic deposit which was sensuously soft to both sight and touch, the contained inner surfaces were often gilt, while gilt spots and coggle lines decorated the unglazed concave or convex upper surfaces. Lynne equates this decoration with musical lines and rhythms and so attempts to unite three of

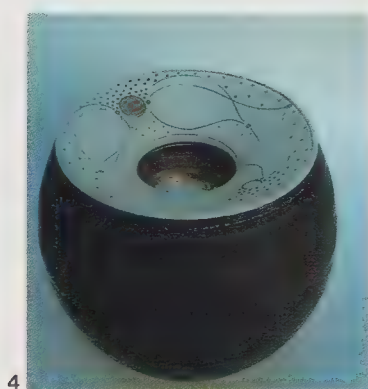


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our senses in the contemplation of the elegant objects. A group of three was acquired for the Queensland Art Gallery including a bowl (which promises to be her new direction) with incised spiralling decoration through the metallic surface. Lynne has since moved to live in Victoria and our best wishes go with her.

Johanna de Maine opened an exhibition in the Craft Centre in South Yarra on the 8th October and at the Potters' Gallery two weeks later. Two influences which work side by side are evident in her pieces, the Germanic salt glaze traditions of her European heritage and her appreciation of Eastern simplicity of form and decoration. Johanna has gained a substantial reputation for the quality of her production ware and these, her exhibition pieces, share the same sense of proportion and refined placement of linear decorative elements. She continues with her satisfying fluted salt glazes and fired stoneware and lately has been exploring celadon glazes with incised Japanese-style decoration that is then enhanced with gilt and silver bands.

Stephanie Outridge's exhibition was one of the most intellectually stimulating in Brisbane during 1984. Stephanie has been in Queensland since 1982 and in 1983 was craftswoman in residence at Griffith University. Her exhibition in July 'Parcels and Places' continues the themes established during her residency. Her sand-blasted, smoke-stained wall panels (often irregular in shape) have an eroded archaic quality that relates to her fascination with Middle Eastern archaeology and the non-functional aspects of ceramics. Think, for instance, how limited would be our knowledge of ancient Greece if it were not for decoration on Greek vases? She intends to leave her records of our contemporary civilisation in one of the most permanent materials known.



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Her 'parcels' she describes as 'drawings wrapped around space' but the visual softness of her smoke-fired pieces is not reflected in the tactile experience. It creates a tension between irregular 'natural effects' and imposed 'order'. This tension extends to her subject matter with whimsical aeroplanes, kites, childlike houses, the 'places' of the exhibition title, are enhanced with gilt details yet enveloped in a foreboding gloom. In all it was a most intelligent and thought-provoking exhibition.

Other exhibitions which deserve noting are Helen Charles' exhibition in April in which handbuilt pots of simple flowing profiles were incised or glaze-decorated with bird forms to express the freedom of flight. In Joan Webster's exhibition, the superbly crafted large scale slab-built pieces were decorated in matt colours with landscapes inspired by her recent trip around Australia. Although one may question the suitability of this form of decoration, the pieces more sculptural in intent and set on bases (such as her depiction of Mt Kosciuszko) appeared more successful. Bill Bartley exhibited his large scale pots with controlled-run ash glazes with those of his wife Helen in November. Helen's work is strongly influenced by Vic Greenaway in the forms and division of the surfaces by black and white glazes but her brushed floral decoration expresses her love of nature. Her pieces are simple, serene and elegant while her slab-built bottles indicate her new direction.

Marc Sauvage, who was invited to participate in the Mayfair Ceramic Award last year, also moved to Brisbane and his *déco* bowl and turned, brilliantly glazed dishes were included in the October group exhibition. Marc has been appointed the Queensland Potter's Association's first potter in residence. It promises to be a stimulating relationship. Kiat Sng,

lecturer in ceramics at the College of Art was also represented in this group show. The landscape platters and their subtle effects indicated his early training as an artist. The platters were featured in his solo exhibition at 'Dabbles on Days' earlier in the year.

Jess Gibson exhibited her handbuilt spherical forms with applied aquatic decoration at the Boston Gallery and occasional ceramic exhibits took place at other venues. Edith-Ann Murray and Jane Hartoon held an exhibition of their individual ceramics and their joint production domestic ware from the Clay Street Pottery, 'Three aspects of porcelain' at the Crafts Council Gallery. The latter, peach bloom and *tenmoku* glazed tea wares are original and functional in design while the titles of their individual carved pieces *Mechanical Oracle*, *Urban Festitude et cetera* gives some idea of their individual concerns. Roz Jones was one of the few exhibitors at the Australia Craft Gallery in Southport before it closed. Roz's principal source of inspiration is the sea near her Mackay home and its influence is seen in her delicately inlaid, coloured handbuilt forms which evoke the slow action of myriad sea creatures on shells and stones.

To call this a review of Queensland pottery in 1984 is somewhat excessive as one cannot pass opinions of exhibitions in Townsville (Arthur and Carol Rosser exhibited salt glazed pottery and Rene Blin and Pat Fearnley pit-fired vessels at the Martin Gallery) or even Toowoomba but it could safely be said there were few surprises. Traditional pottery dominates.

Glenn R. Cooke is the Curator of Decorative Arts at the Queensland Art Gallery.

1. Marc Sauvage. *Two Bowls*.
2. Lynne McDowell. *Container*.
3. Roz Jones. *Sugartime Festival Exhibition, Mackay*.
4. Lynne McDowell. *Double Wall Pot*. Oxide inlay with gold lustre.
5. Kiat Sng. *Square Platter*.
6. Helen Bartley. *Container*. White magnesium glaze.
7. Johanna de Maine. *Vase*.
8. Jess Gibson. *Vessel*.
9. Stephanie Outridge. *Wall Panel*.

Women of the Cloth

An Exhibition of Student Textiles from the School of Art: Tasmania

Jeanne Keefer

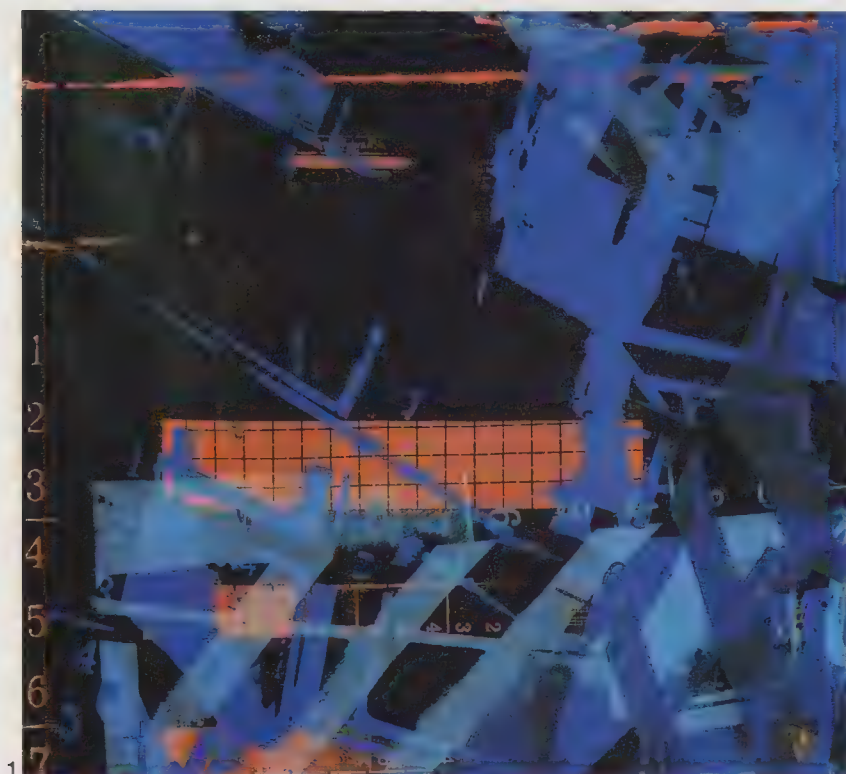
In early 1980 Margaret Ainscow was hired to establish a new course in fibres and fabrics at the School of Art, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education in Launceston. She was to develop the programme within an established school of art. Five years later, the results can be seen at the Jam Factory in Adelaide. The exhibition 'Women of the Cloth', presents the work of seven students from this

programme. These students are recent graduates or nearing the end of their study. The exhibition reflects the philosophy of the course and considers textiles in the broadest possible manner. A cross-disciplinary approach has been encouraged.

Students are constantly required to develop, justify and expand their conceptual base. Technique is viewed as a functional vocabulary through which a visual literacy is developed. Following an initial preparatory period, where the student undertakes a structured series of exercises designed to develop a basic technical competency; the individual programme is largely self-determined.

There are a number of reasons why one elects to work within a specific medium. While each of these seven exhibitors works in a uniquely personal manner, the unifying element is the lexicon of textiles. Their concern is first about ideas, and second, with the struggle to articulate them. They have come from a variety of backgrounds, some urban and others rural. Some have grown up in Launceston, while others have come from interstate. Their ages range from 19 to 43, and personal situations vary from being young single students to the mother of teenagers.

Linda Benson is concerned with the environment. She has a facility with both the drawn image and the

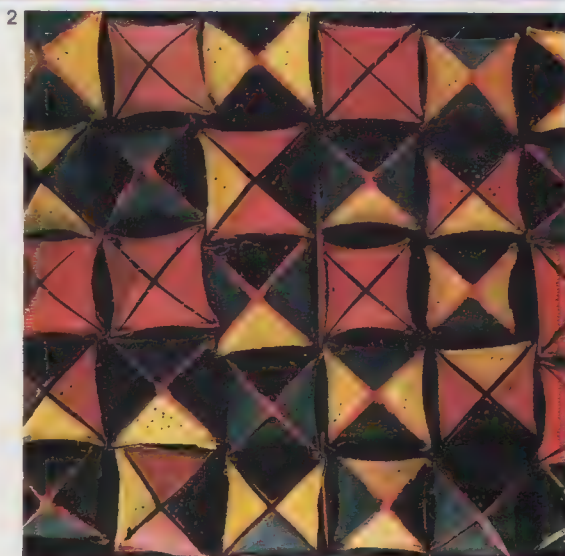


1. Wendy Paulucci.
Gambit View. 120 x 250 cms. 1984.
Photo Mark Bartkevicius.

2. Helen Flood. *X-Spec-Tations*. 190 x 270 cms. 1984. Photo Mark Bartkevicius.

3. Rosemary Burke.
Metamorphosis of the Kozo Moth. 50 x 40 cms. Photo Mark Bartkevicius.

4. Linda Benson.
Window on Nature's Garden. 67 x 46 cms. Photo Mark Bartkevicius.



woven fabric and her works are hand-woven, painted and stitched. She says, 'My fine silk cloth fragments reflect my concerns for our natural environment. Enclosing the delicate pieces in protective mounts echoes my feelings that our duty lies in the protection of our natural heritage'.

Rosemary Burke fabricates exquisite miniature objects that have a sense of provocative mystery. Rosemary writes, 'Central to my work as an embroiderer is a small three-dimensional form which has become the unit through which I can develop intuitive responses to concepts about the female role within family and social structures. My techniques are very simple and develop from immediate responses to materials'.

By contrast, Barbara Bullard works on a large format. She also has a background in embroidery, but now builds, paints, wraps and stitches large canvas surfaces. She says, 'My aim is to extend and explore the physical structure of the art fabric. I work with painting, canvas and mixed media including bamboo bound with torn fabrics, metallic and cotton threads in both two and three dimensions'.

Deborah Evans works, technically, in the most traditional manner, weaving silk cloth. Her interest lies in the manipulation of colour, facilitated by an expert understanding of dyes. In describing her work, she

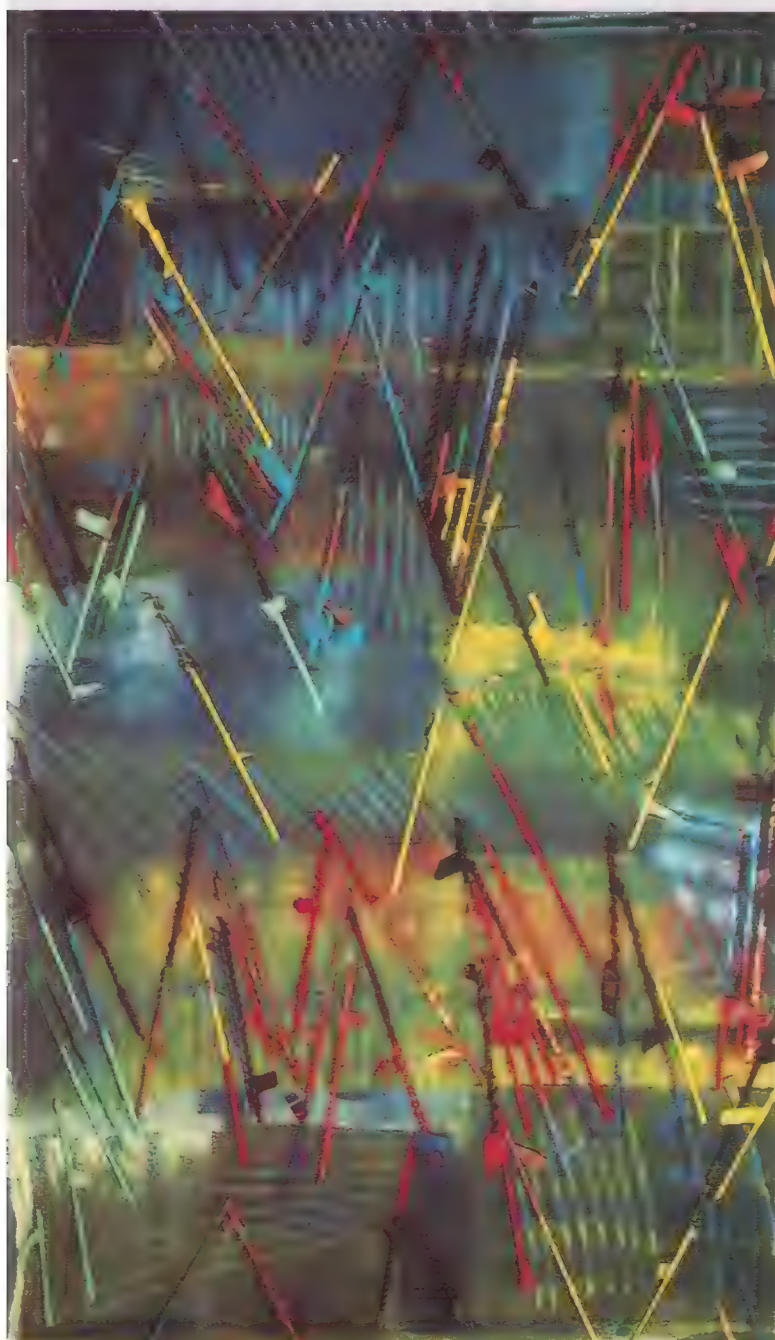
says, 'Recent work focuses on the interaction of colour, pattern and weave. With an ikat and space, dyed warp, the aim is to re-interpret the traditions of resist dyed cloth'. The result is a lustrous fabric, sensuous and inviting.

Helen Flood writes of her work, 'An interest in primitive shelter and its decoration opened doors to explore the inherent characteristics of the mobile shelter. My work, I feel, exhibits a search for a new interpretation of these characteristics with decorative and jovial overtones'. The work has an expressionistic feeling, and a sense of revelling in the intrinsic qualities of the materials.

Wendy Paulucci came to the course with a developed ability in screen printing. She has concentrated on the development of the image through the use of multiple layers of photo silk screening. Wendy says, 'My current work involves the development of single image printed onto a fabric length. This development is created by building up a series of repeated images which gives an illusion of space'.

It is most satisfying to see this calibre of work being produced by students. It will no doubt be exciting to watch their individual development in future years.

Jeanne Keefer is a lecturer at the School of Art, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education.



5



6



7

5. Barbara Bullard.
Sense of Direction
1983. Photo Mark
Bartkevicius.

6. Alison Hood. *Time
Worn*. 128 x 113
cms. 1984. Photo
Mark Bartkevicius.

7. Deborah Evans.
Untitled. 43 x 35
cms. 1984. Photo
Jeanne Keefer.

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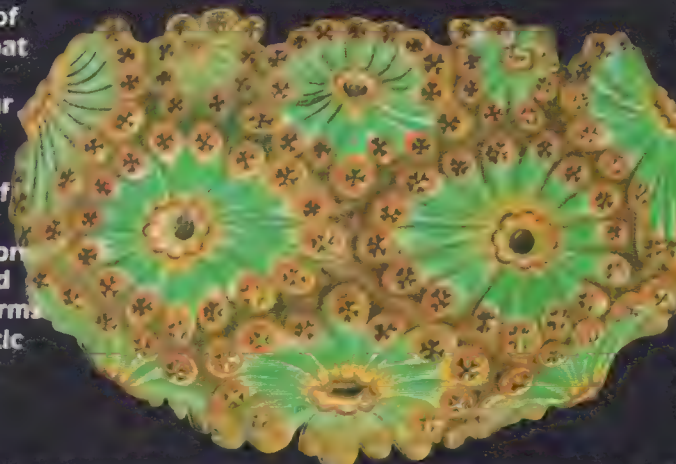


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Stooks to Stacks

Building a Riverina Haystack

Mark Brennan

The builder put the finishing touches to the 50 tonne haystack. One space remained. The top 60 centimetres of ladder resting against the 10 metre stack rose above the near-completed ridge. The builder, alone on the peak, places the ridge sheaves, first from one end and then from the other, until he works himself off the top of the stack, and onto the ladder.

'That's it. And it'll take one hell of a wind to blow that off.'

The stack had been built as carefully as a crafted house and without a nail, wire or plank. The stack, so fluid and unstable in the building, is now a solid structure of locked-in components, pronouncing its strength and integrity as does a well-shaped pot, a pleasingly textured weaving or an evenly tensioned piece of knitting.

Haystacks are a special feature of the Coolamon-Matong-Ganmain area of New South Wales. With solid shapes that resemble farmhouse bread loaves or rotund thatched cottages, they dot the countryside north of Wagga Wagga. The knowledge of the craft belongs to fewer each year, not because those who have it want to guard their secrets, but simply

because sheaf hay is disappearing from Australia, except in this one thriving hay-making district.

Once, all farmers built their own haystacks. This activity now belongs to a few local stack builders and their teams. The stacks are not built of square bales of hay, stacked like bricks one on top of the other but of sheaves of green hay allowed to season for a fortnight after cutting. They are seasoned by standing them in stooks.

Stooks are wigwam type structures arranged in lines far enough apart for the hay lorries to move between them. Each stook consists of between 12 and 20 sheaves stood up against each other. Well arranged stooks will stand up to substantial winds, shed rain, and allow the green hay to air and dry on the inside, with only the outside browning off.

The whole hay making exercise is to cut long stalks of wheat or oats as close to the ground as possible. This is done before all the nutrients of the plant go into the cereal head and while the stalk is dry but still green. If the hay crop were left any longer, the stalk becomes what we generally know as straw.

The sheaves themselves consist structurally of an armful of stalks, tied in the middle with binder twine.



The *heads* of the immature cereal are at the top, and the *butts* on the ground. The familiar image of 'bringing in the sheaves' with scythe, hands and string is now done by binder machines, themselves antique pieces of equipment.

The practice of haystack building with sheaves persists as a method of storing hay that will be cut up for *chaff*. Chaff-cutting technology handles sheaf hay best.

Haystacks are built with sheaves of hay that have been stooked to dry in the paddocks. Around early November each year, acreages large and small, are home to rows upon rows of the small tapered structures, the stooked sheaf hay. Stooking itself is an important part of the process in building haystacks. Each stook is most easily stood up by two people who knock four central sheaves together and stand them upright. The remaining sheaves are then arranged around the central 'pole'. Every outside sheaf is given a special angular shape by the builder by forcing the bottoms or 'butts' of the sheaf against the ground. In later handling, each one is used and placed in the stack in a way that utilises the features of each sheaf. The string tying each sheaf has a knot in it. The knot is placed on the outside when stooking. Therefore the knot and the long side of the sheaf are synonymous. Each sheaf will be forced into adopting an angular butt by arranging the sheaves in this pattern. The shape of each one is used in the stack to consolidate the desired shape.

One example of this is when building the outside of the roof, all the angled sheaf butts on the outside will have their protruding long ends downward, and short ends at the top thus each creating its angled pitch for rain run-off. They also contribute to the inward slope of the roof.

As with any craft there are associated myths, techniques and principles. There are also some well established conventions.

'If it's not stooked right you can forget about building a decent stack.'

Tony Jones, a recognised master of his craft has been building stacks for 30 years, both for himself and for other hay farmers. His stacks are recognisable by their aesthetic and structural qualities. His activities during

the season are characterised by the horse-drawn lorries he prefers to use for bringing the hay from around the paddock to the stack site. The only constant sound during work is the gentle chug of the engine driving the *elevator*, a movable and adjustable escalator used to transport sheaves to the top of the rising stack. Three horse-drawn wagons pull up at the elevator in turn, have their load pitched off, and return to the stooked paddock to collect another. They move in and out with a pacifying regularity.

With a pitcher, turner and builder on the stack, three one-tonne horse wagons and their hay pitchers are kept busy. It is the responsibility of the driver of the wagon to pitch the sheaves onto the ground or the elevator, and thus to the rest of the team, at the required rate. He is now the *lorry pitcher*. He gets the hay onto the site. There the sheaf is forked again by the *stack pitcher* to the *turner* who then places them the right side up and right way round for the *builder*, who places them in their final position. The builder handles and places and presses into position every sheaf in the stack. Only one person builds a stack. Only one person can completely monitor the spring, tension, density and final shaping of the construction. His first decision is to choose a convenient place in the paddock, and set out the ground plan for the stack.

A 50 tonne stack starts life as a ten metre by six metre rectangle, with added rounded ends two metres out. A 60 tonne stack would be eleven metres by six metres and a 70 tonne stack twelve metres by seven metres.

'It's got to be square and straight or it's not worth doing.'

Sheaves are used to mark this initial and important survey. As with any building the foundations are just that, foundations. In this case squareness and proportion are crucial.

All is now ready for the laying of the outside row of the ground floor. With butts out and lying half-edged, the plan of the stack is circumscribed. The half-edging technique is used on all the outside rows of the walls, and is made possible by the fact that all sheaves, through having been stooked, have been slightly flattened. Instead of lying sheaves flat they are turned at an angle half-way between their flat and their edged position, thus *half-edged*. This makes for a more compact outer skin on the stack.



The line of newly laid sheaves is checked for straightness of sides and roundness of ends. Then it is time for the first binding row. The builder nods, the turner whistles and the sheaf is delivered from the pitcher's fork. The turner takes the sheaf onto his fork and plops it in front of the builder, turned the right way round and ready for placing. For this row, the right way round is heads out, butts in. It is the first binding row, the row next to the outside that holds the outside in. This particular notion is basic in maintaining the stability of the stack; to stop the whole lot bursting out. The heads of the first binding row are laid up to the strings of the outside row of sheaves. The first binding row sheaves are laid flat (as opposed to half edged as in the outside row) and thus this line of sheaves has about half the density of the outside row. The sheaves in this row are placed with a slight gap between each to comfortably intermesh with the next binding row. The pattern and pace of work is now constant for the second, third and fourth binding rows, right to the centre.

The pitcher throws his sheaves to the centre, taking care not to disrupt or shake the outside. As the stack rises it will become springy and unstable and everyone must be sensitive to its progress and to the possible disruptions of its growth.

'When a stack is well up you can jump on one end and watch the other end go up. It's like a big wave.'

By the time the ground floor fourth binding row is laid, the earth is covered except for a crack up the middle. As the last piece of solid ground disappears, the builder knows he will walk on every sheaf from here on in, pressing each one into its rightful place. The crack left up the middle and circumscribed by the fourth binding row has itself to be bound. If this is not done, the stack, as it rises, will split apart. To achieve this binding, single sheaves are placed alternately head and tail over the crack. This holds all the binding rows. The basic principle is to hold the structure in. The strategy used to achieve this is to bind rows to each other. The overall structural technique is held and defined by the rounded ends. This whole procedure, from outside to inside, is maintained at each level to the eaves, except the builder alternates direction round the stack at each level. This contributes to evenness and helps him keep a watchful eye on the overall structure.

As the walls rise they are angled slightly outward. They angle at a rate that will make the top of the walls

10 sheaves wide as opposed to 8 on the ground. One whole row all the way round will have been added.

The description so far suggests that the bottom of the stack is flat. This, of course, is true at ground level and for most of the way up to the tops of the walls. However, when the stack reaches around two-thirds of the way up the wall section, a new aspect of the structure is introduced through the process known as *hearting up*. The central rows are thickened in relation to the outside rows by introducing a larger number of sheaves per square area. Thus the stack is given a *heart*. An extension of this mounding upwards becomes the foundation of the roof. Furthermore, as the stack settles after building (about a metre), the heart carries the bulk of the collapsing weight. An old stack being dismantled will reveal less heart than a newly formed stack.

The technique used for creating greater volume towards the centre is to add extra sheaves, coming in half a row each time and topping and tailing in the centre as usual. This building-up operation is done several times. When it is completed, the central part of the stack is eight rows higher than the top of the walls. The stack has now reached the outward walls limit. Now it is ready for placement of the *eave row*, a kind of little overhang that encircles the whole structure.

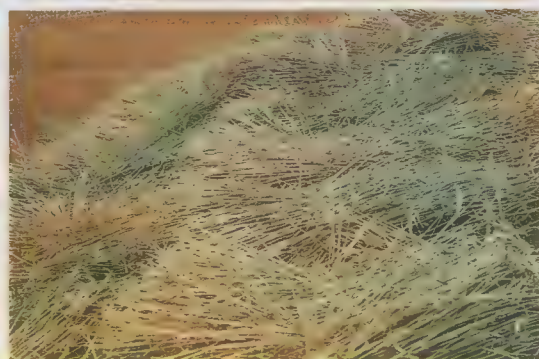
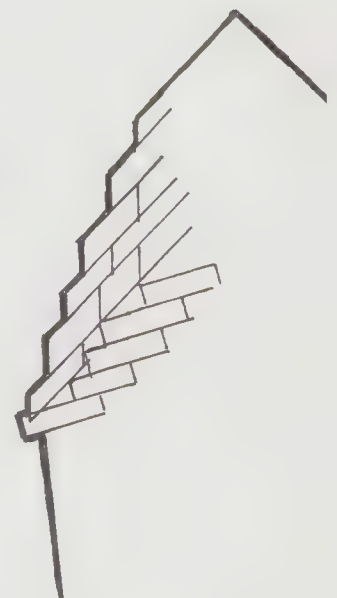
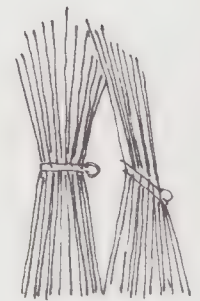
'You choose well-formed solid sheaves; they have to run off a lot of water.'

The builder, usually working on his knees, places sheaves, half-edged and twine knots up, around the top of the wall. These stick out some extra 30cm from the already outward-angled wall. This means that the butt section of each eave sheaf, from its binding string outwards, protrudes over the existing wall. From the eaves up, all sheaves are laid with butts out. When the eaves are in place, the stack is ready for the more extensive hearting operation and the building of the roof.

'It just won't work without a solid heart.'

This central thickening is the precursor to the building of the roof. When the first roof row sheaves are placed, they sit on top of the eave sheaves and against the heart.

As the roof building proceeds, the all-important outside roof row sheaves are selected for density and shape. When the whole structure is done, the butts of the



outside roof sheaves will be the only part of the stack directly exposed to the weather.

'The whole aim of building a stack is to build one that'll turn water, and stand the wind.'

The notion of the heart starts quite early. As already noted, the walls go out as they go up, working to ten rows across at the top versus eight rows on the bottom. This is a structural result of springing the stack.

'If a stack's not sprung, it'll simply fall apart.'

The springing is achieved by gradually filling in more sheaves pressed against each other along their length such that, by the top of the wall, the stack is two sheaves wider than at the bottom. It is from the shaping, pressing and binding procedure, that the heart is born.

When the walls are built and sprung, the eaves placed and bound, and the heart enlarged until it is two metres higher than the outside, it is time to build the roof.

'Anyone can build a butt, but getting that roof up and keeping it on is the thing.'

The first *thatch*, or roof row, sits with its butt firmly on top of the eaves, and this row, as all others, is bound by catching the heads with the second row butts and so on, towards the middle. The outside row sheaves are laid knots down. This means that the long angle of the butts are down and this contributes to the slope of the roof. As each layer is added and the roof rises, the inside of the stack is also being built and raised such that the centre is always higher than the outside thatch rows.

The gap is lessened by bringing in the rising thatch sheaves by 15cm (one-fourth of sheaf length) each time. Eventually the two outside thatch rows meet, and there are no binding rows left. Although the local language uses the term *thatch rows*, the stack is not in fact thatched. This is a completely different kind of operation. In fact the boast is that if the stack is well built, it should be unnecessary to thatch it, or indeed, place any extra covering over it.

As the space along the top diminishes, the stack pitcher retires down the ladder. The ridging at both ends is completed. The turner follows suit and the builder is left to place the final ridge sheaves, as he in turn works himself off the top of the stack onto his ladder. Normal practice in forming the ridge is to tie

two sheaves together by their strings, and sit them butts up astride the top. Tony Jones expresses his skill by standing individual sheaves loosely upright; the heads from each side meshing to form the peak. The builder enjoys the few minutes alone on top of the completed stack, 'like tucking the kids in at night', taking full responsibility for its well-being.

A well-built haystack made of properly seasoned hay is expected to stand and hold its quality for five years and more.

Local convention has it that you need to build around 40 stacks before you can be regarded as a builder in your own right. The progress from apprentice to journeyman to master is slow. Existing builders don't like giving up their position, and not many 'young ones' (below 50) are interested enough to stick it out over the years necessary to build up their own skills and to gain the confidence of the farmers. Only three have learnt the craft in the past ten years. Like many other crafts it depends on not only having the technical knowledge, but also developing the insight and feel for the material that comes from experience.

'If you get too much heart too soon you'll spring it too much, and push the ends out.'

'The secret of building a stack that will turn water is to have a solid heart, particularly around the eave and the roof, otherwise the stack will buckle as it settles after a couple of weeks.'

'If you get fluffy hay you have to adapt.'

'There are different styles people develop.'

'It's about 50 percent roof, 50 percent wall by volume. Five metres of wall to six metres of roof by height.'

'A well-sprung stack has a nice spring. Every sheaf will have some tilt on it.'

'If it feels too springy in one spot, Watch out.'

There are different ways of building a stack just as there are different ways of carving wood or throwing pots — depending on the material. One bit of advice, however, that is death to an aspiring builder's reputation is,

'It'll stand up son, but make sure and throw a tarp over the top when it's done.'

Mark Brennan lives in the country outside Wagga in a house he built himself. He provides all-and-sundry with horse-van holidays with his three draft horses.



Restoring Elizabeth Farm

III : Colonial Furniture

Susan Hunt

In a history museum, it is not that this is the *kind* of hat Napoleon wore, but that this is the *very* hat Napoleon wore Such an emphasis on authenticity provides a radiance of value and scarcity that hallows the object in itself, so that often a museum provides, not an account of social processes, but a collection of isolated objects sacred in themselves.' (Donald Horne). In a house museum such as Elizabeth Farm this is a special problem. Here the social processes, showing *how* people lived and conveying something of the atmosphere of surroundings are of great importance.



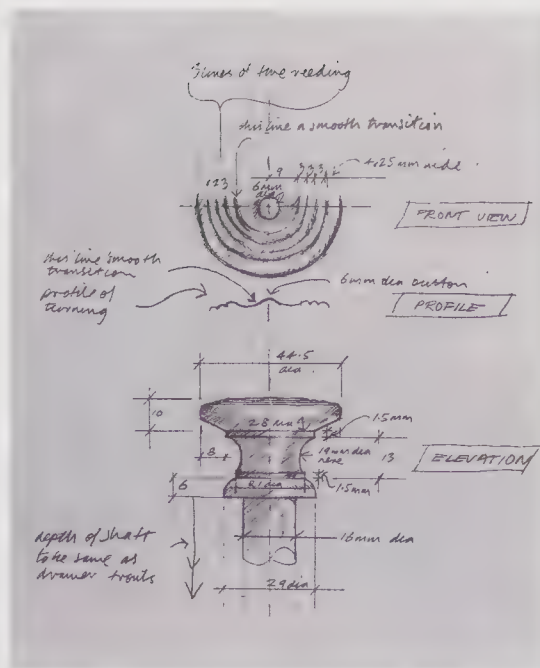
Elizabeth Farm.
Joseph Lycett.
Views in Australia. 1824.
Mitchell Library.

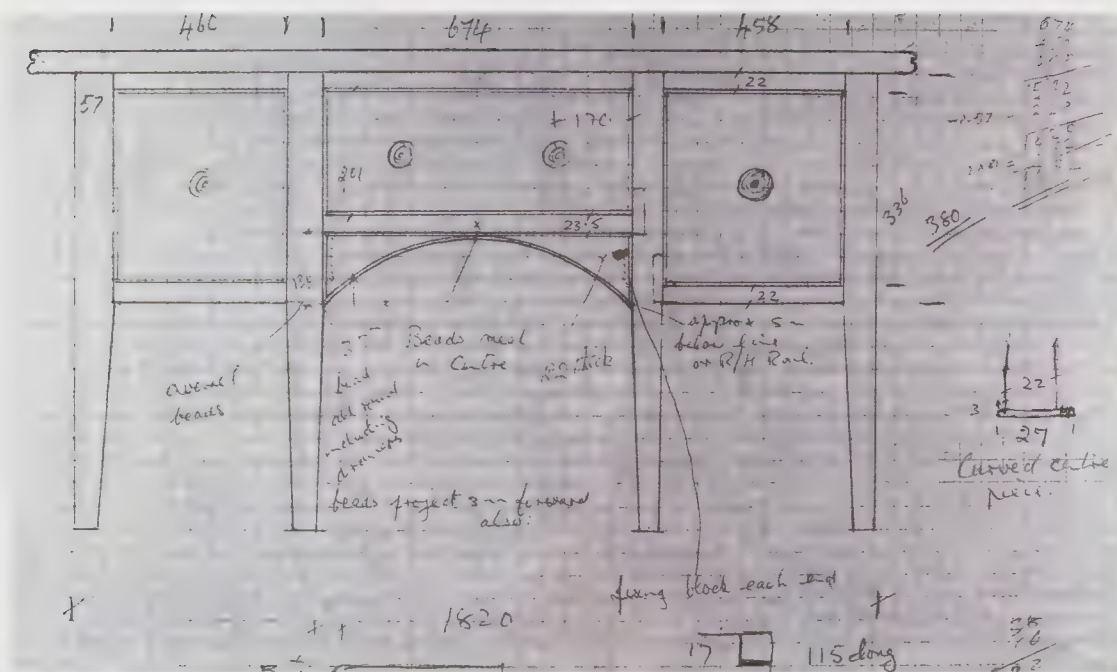
Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta was opened in June 1984 as an historic house museum by the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. The house was built in 1793 by John and Elizabeth Macarthur, some of our first settlers to the colony. Elizabeth Farm is one of the oldest surviving European-style buildings in Australia.



Elizabeth Farm's innovative curatorial policy whilst stressing accuracy, challenges this aura of authenticity. The most important objects at Elizabeth Farm are modern replicas, accurate copies of the furniture, portraits and objects known to have belonged to John and Elizabeth Macarthur. By using facsimiles, Elizabeth Farm has escaped the tyranny of the precious object. The simple furnishings of the rooms enable visitors to 'feel' how Elizabeth Farm was used and lived in by the Macarthur family, in the second quarter of the 19th century. It draws attention to the house and the Macarthurs, not to an introduced collection of precious objects. Visitors are encouraged to sit at John Macarthur's desk and read his letters, examine the sideboard in the dining room and feel the elaborately turned cedar four-post double bed. It is the intimate interaction with accessible objects in a simple but carefully structured historical environment that establishes Elizabeth Farm as a museum that accounts for social processes. It engages the imagination of the visitor, not his/her connoisseurship, then subtly directs it.

Through detailed research of the Macarthur family's archives, the Historic Houses Trust of NSW located a small number of items, still in the possession of the descendants, which are believed to have survived from the household of John and Elizabeth Macarthur: a





The original cedar sideboard (c.1820) shown below was duplicated after careful measurements were taken.





Details from the original cedar and hardwood bed (c.1830) that was duplicated for Elizabeth Farm.

sideboard, a toilet mirror, a dressing table, a four-post double bed, a four-post single bed, a cupboard and a table desk.

The sideboard, raised on six square tapered legs, is a country version of a sophisticated Sheraton style. The table desk is simple but rare, and like the sideboard, features tapering legs. A separate cupboard with moulded panels containing a series of finely detailed pigeon holes stands on a simple table with end drawers. The toilet table, although extremely elegant to our modern eyes, is completely undecorated and we believe it was always meant to be covered, as it is at Elizabeth Farm, with dressing table covers of voile.

All of this furniture was possibly made in the early 1820s and perhaps predates reformation of the house. On stylistic grounds it is unlikely that the beds were made before 1830. Their provenance is however well established for Elizabeth Farm, and they were probably made at the time of the remodelling. The turning of the posts resemble, but are not identical to the designs shown in 1826 (Smith) and 1833 (Loudon). Unlike later colonial four-post beds the back posts are square tapered not turned. The curtains are hung on a continuous iron rod around the tester, which is concealed by the valance of the hangings. The least unusual of these items is the toilet mirror, which does not appear to be of colonial manufacture, and is of a standard but handsome design of the late 1830s.

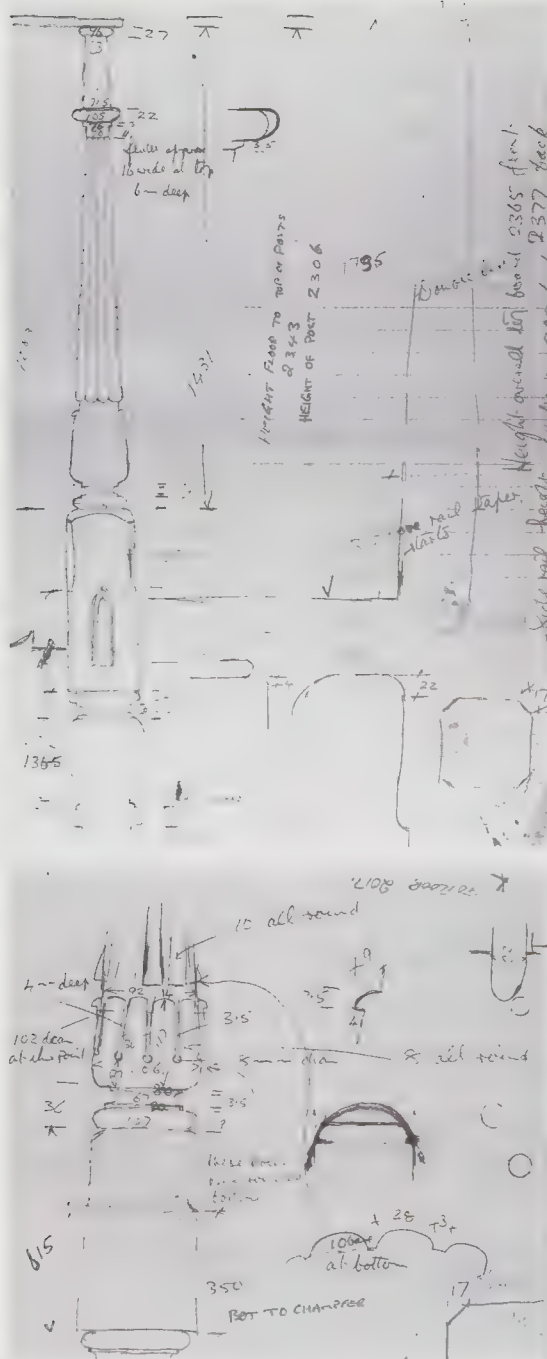
The 1854 inventory of furniture, in particular, provided valuable information for the recreation of Elizabeth Farm's interiors. Rather than buying quantities of



furniture of the period, (old but of no historical relevance to Elizabeth Farm) to recreate the interiors, the Historic Houses Trust decided to confine the furnishings, where possible, to facsimiles of these pieces and supplement them only with generalised furnishings. These modern, accurate reproductions are the major elements in an elaborate theatre set. The rooms are sparsely furnished and the replicas are complemented, not rivalled. The other furnishings have been reduced where possible to their simplest forms or shapes: tables are covered by cloths, chairs and couches are fitted with loose covers.

The furnishing of the rooms has been devised to enhance their architectural character, in particular the finely detailed cedar joinery, possibly designed by John Verge.

The majority of the furniture for Elizabeth Farm was made by Maurie Rogers and Alain Jaccoud of Stonehill Restorations Pty. Ltd., Emu Plains. Stan Hellyer and his father began the Stonehill restoration business in 1971, operating from Glenbrook. By 1980 Stonehill had grown considerably and had 32 employees, 7 working



Working drawings for the artisans reproducing the bed.

specifically in the joinery workshops. Furniture and cabinet making is only a small part of Stonehill's extensive restoration business, the most experienced restoration firm operating in NSW. Stan Hellyer's team of tradesmen have restored Fernhill, Hartley Court House, Elizabeth Bay House, Collingwood and recently Lyndhurst. Making furniture for Elizabeth Farm was an unusual job for Stonehill, but with their long experience in restoring and repairing the finest detailing in early colonial houses, it was one that lay well within their capabilities. Stan Hellyer said one of the greatest problems was trying to copy furniture without having the sample constantly in front of you. It was Maurie Rogers' painstaking task to visit various locations with the Historic Houses Trust's curators to inspect the pieces of furniture and make precise measurements from each. One of the most challenging things was to 'copy the irregularities of the furniture, to make sure it wasn't too perfect'. James Broadbent, Elizabeth Farm's Curator, recalls drawing attention to a flat section on the turning of the bed posts. He was promptly told by Maurie that this unusual feature was part of the original. True to the principles of conservation, Maurie sought to objectively reproduce the pieces, not improve

upon them. Maurie Rogers is the foreman in the joinery workshop at Stonehill and one of the few craftsmen still working in this traditional craft. He worked in England for 14 years before coming to Australia in 1968. 'Working for a firm which specialised in reproduction furniture and joinery, I learnt everything on the job', Maurie said. 'Work methods were very different then. You didn't use machinery there and everything you made, you fixed.' Maurie used to take his tools around on a handcart along the streets of south west London, in the Sutton area. When Maurie migrated to Australia he left most of his traditional, specialised tools in England. Yet when he started restoration joinery work for Iron and Hughes, Maurie said he could have really done with them. He does have some specialised tools such as the wooden moulding plane, the bullnosed plane and drawer knife which most modern day joiners would not use. One of Maurie's first large restoration jobs was another John Verge Colonial house: Elizabeth Bay House, now owned by the Historic Houses Trust. 'It was a job requiring top-class old style joinery', Maurie said.

Maurie works in the joinery workshop with Alain Jaccoud who did most of the turning and finishing of the furniture for Elizabeth Farm. Alain, a Swiss, trained as a cabinet maker in Geneva. Both Maurie and Alain have many years experience in this rare traditional craft, yet what is just as important as their individual skills is their ability to work as a team. While Maurie is a joiner, Alain specialises in carving and turning. The Stonehill workshop, in this respect, is similar to a large 18th century furniture making workshop, such as Chippendale, which also used subdivision of labour. The master artisans supervised skilled workers who specialised in one aspect of the job. In the making of a chair, for example, a joiner made the frame of a chair, but did not carry out the carving or turning. This was left to a specialist carver.

The process of producing a modern facsimile of an 1830s and 1840s piece of furniture is a complicated one. After Maurie had taken precise measurements from the original pieces of furniture, he drew a two-dimensional outline of the sections to scale, on a flat plank of timber called a rod. As Maurie explained: 'it is hard to get the correct quality in turning' (which in this case was largely done by Alain). 'It is the feel which is important, not just whether it is a semicircle or round shape.' For those pieces such as the beds that required intricate turning and carving, Alain had only a few photographs and Maurie's description and measurements. Any rounding or turning is done by a lathe. 'There is always a certain amount of work which can't be done by machine', said Alain 'and must be finished by hand. The better the turn, the better the finish.'

Whilst Stonehill uses modern machinery, much work is, of necessity, still done by hand. The metal cutters, for example, that are inserted into the electric spindle to plane the wood in mouldings, are still made by hand. Every moulding which needs to be accurately reproduced needs a new set of knives accurately cut to the exact profile of the moulding. These are measured by Maurie. It often takes Maurie four or five hours just to grind a set of cutters. The workshop at Stonehill has racks of these razor sharp steel cutters, a fascinating record of the variety of timber mouldings used in colonial NSW, from the simplest bead to the most elaborate combinations of *ovolos*, *quirks*, *cavettos*, and *reedings*. Several cutters, now with Elizabeth Farm labels have been added to this collection.

Even when Maurie had taken down the most precise and extensive measurements (as seen by his drawing), there was often a good deal of detective work to do before the pieces were made. When the sideboard was first examined, Maurie found by studying some old screw holes that the top had not been turned over as had been thought; but that it had been cut shorter and



Profiles of moulding cutters at the Stonehill workshop.



Traditional tools are often required for reproduction work.



Maurie shows how a cutter shapes the wooden moulding.



Maurie Rogers and Allain Jaccard at the Stonehill workshop.



The completed sideboard replica in the Dining Room.



The toilet mirror reproduction from the privately owned original in mahogany and mahogany veneer.

the surface replaned. A table now in the kitchen at Elizabeth Farm was copied from what is believed by family tradition to have been half a table; the larger version being cut in half many years ago.

Another important consideration was the type of wood used in the making of the furniture. Whilst most of the pieces are made from cedar, they are not all the same type of cedar. Some pieces such as the sideboard were made from old cedar. This colonial cedar is very hard to get but it has a different colour and texture to the modern variety Stonehill gets from the Philippines. Alain stressed the need 'to understand wood . . . You need good timber to turn and the grain must be right for the individual type of piece'.

Apart from the toilet mirror, probably made in England, the other pieces of furniture were made in NSW for John and Elizabeth Macarthur. The simple pieces, desk, cupboard and table bear no markings or initials of NSW cabinet makers and probably were made by joiners on the Macarthur estate.

A study of the archives reveals that in the 1820s John Macarthur was purchasing cabinet furniture, ivory door-knobs, hinges, drawer handles and drawer locks presumably to be used by cabinet makers working for him. The beds, which are remarkably similar in design and detailing, might have been made by a Sydney or Parramatta cabinet maker of greater skill. An article in the *Australian* in 1827 gives us some idea of the state of the Sydney furniture trade at that time:

'The cabinet makers of the colony are increasing in both number and ability, and it will not be long we think before the custom of sending to England for furniture will cease to be pursued, either for the sake of gratifying taste or from notions of economy. The predilection for English furniture is very strong, but when we hear of the excellent workmanship, combined with the beautiful woods of the colony in the manufacture of the bulky articles of furniture most people will begin to be of the opinion that it is better to spend their dumps here.'

Whilst the cedar furniture was undertaken by Stonehill, the mahogany toilet mirror reproduction (now in the pink bedroom) with its intricately carved supporting brackets was made by Brian McNulty. A cabinet maker of 35 years experience, Brian started his trade in Melbourne with Berkowitz and Sons. He now has his own workshop and reproduction furniture business at Asquith.



A replica of John Macarthur's table desk. The cedar original is in a private collection.

When reproducing the mahogany toilet mirror, Brian used a very interesting technique. As well as taking measurements and using photographs, Brian made a plaster cast of the original piece to work from. This cast, made by covering the piece in plasticine and casting the mould in plaster, was important in giving Brian a better idea of the detail and depth of carving. Brian said, 'the traditional technique is the use of a beeswax and castor oil pudding which produces the same effect as the plasticine.'

Whilst most of the furniture with Macarthur provenance is cedar, the toilet mirror was in mahogany. Mahogany is a very different wood from cedar to work with. The mahogany is much firmer and more suitable for carving. 'You get a much crisper effect when carving mahogany', Brian said.

Once the furniture was made for Elizabeth Farm, it then had to be French-polished. French polishing itself is another involved craft. Furniture restorer Peter Kenny undertook the task of French-polishing all the major pieces of furniture with Macarthur provenance. This was an unusual job for Peter, in that he had to inspect the original pieces to accustom his eyes to the 'correct mellow colour of the wood'.

The furniture at Elizabeth Farm now consists largely of modern facsimiles copied accurately from original pieces, but not improved. Although their colour is mellow, matching their originals, no other attempts have been made to age the pieces artificially, or to give them an artificial patina. Inevitably with time and use, this will come.

Although it sounds contradictory, the reproduction furniture at Elizabeth Farm, through choice of materials and skill in assembly, has an integrity which antique furniture, however similar, would not have had.

Susan Hunt is the curator of education at Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta.

[This article is indebted to the assistance of James Broadbent.]

THE FAWKES

(A CRAFT FAMILY SAGA)

MORTNEY CLEM KIM GEORGETTE YOKO

by V.R.



THERE WAS MOVEMENT AT THE STATION...



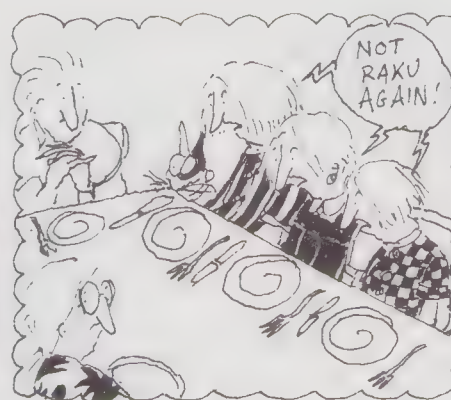
IF MORTNEY HAD BEEN WORKING IN AN ADVERTISING AGENCY CLEM MIGHT HAVE UNDERSTOOD.



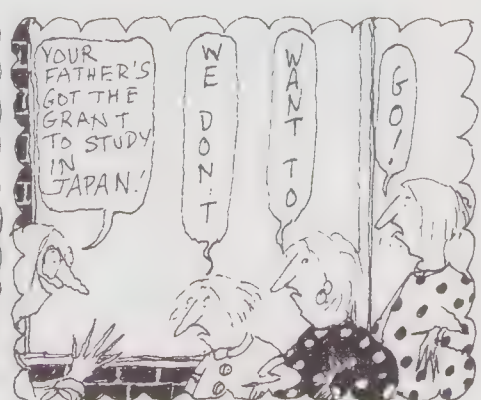
THAT NIGHT CLEM HAD NIGHTMARES.



WOULD THEIR DAUGHTERS KIM, GEORGETTE AND YOKO UNDERSTAND?



HOW WOULD THEY SURVIVE?



WHAT VILE ADJUSTMENTS WOULD THEY HAVE TO MAKE?



THE FOLLOWING EVENING CLEM OPENED A BOTTLE OF JACOB'S CREEK IN GOOD TIME TO AIR BEFORE TEA.



BUT MORTNEY HAD THE UPPER HAND - HE ARRIVED HOME WITH A BOTTLE OF PINK YELLOWGLEN CHAMPAS!



THERE WAS NO GOING BACK - MORTNEY HAD RECEIVED THE CALL OF CLAY!

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GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

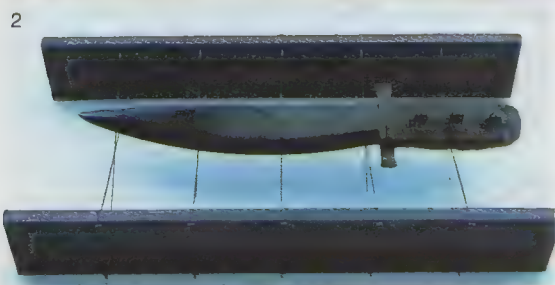


1. **Neil Roberts.** Installation *Knives and Shadows*. Neon, glass and mixed media. Arts Council Gallery, ACT.

2. **Neil Roberts.** Detail from *Knives and Shadows*. Knife 33 x 16 cms, glass and mixed media. Arts Council Gallery, ACT.

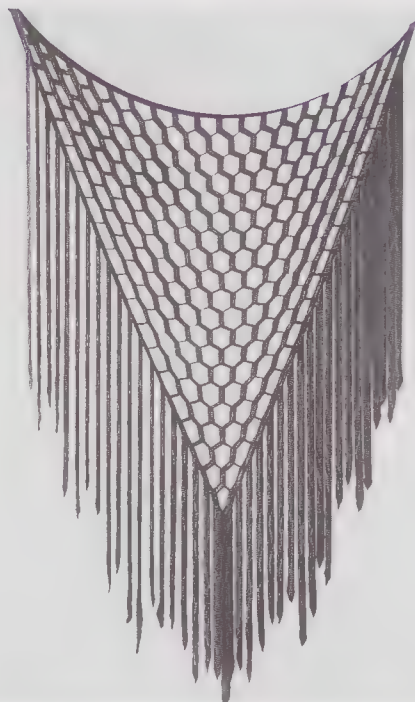
3. **Antoon Meerman.** *Writing cabinet* in fumed myrtle, leather and perspex. 1st year assoc. diploma student Canberra School of Art exhibition at Beaver Galleries, ACT.

4. **Nick Reid.** *Shelving system* in enamelled customwood. 2nd year associate diploma student Canberra School of Art exhibition at Beaver Galleries, ACT.



GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Pat Grummet.** *And Peace Ever After ... Tomorrow ...* Hand-dyed silk bands, stitched to form honeycomb network. Approx. 220 x 150 x 10 cms. Jam Factory, SA.



2. **Susan Ostling.** *8-Legged Dreaming Vessel.* Terracotta. Painted with coloured slips. 22 x 25 x 11 cms. 1984. Mori Gallery, Sydney.

1
2

3. **Philippe Lakeman.** Untitled ceramic piece, terracotta, coloured slips, earthenware glazes, gold fringing. 100 cms high. Devise Gallery, Melbourne.

4. **Barbara Goulborn.** Detail from quilt *Star Distortions*. 240 x 260 cms. 1984. Meat Market Craft Centre, Melbourne.



5. **Tess & Helena Bialy.** *Trekking in Arnhem Land.* Wool/mohair base, applied decoration. MGM Gallery, South Melbourne.



4



5



GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS



1. **Grant Vaughan.**
Cedar Form. Carved from Australian Red Cedar. Oil finish. 34 x 14 cms. Lismore Regional Art Gallery. Photo John McCormick.

2. **Brett Bancroft.**
Dancing Creature I. 75 cms. Lismore Regional Art Gallery. Photo John McCormick.

3. **Jan Ross-Manley.**
Waterbirds. Dye drawing, painting with computer printouts on satin. Acrylic cover tray. 51 x 91 x 4.5 cms. Crafts Council of Tasmania.

4. **Rob Matheson.** *Frill Neck Lizard ceramic pot.* Turned pot with hand carved ceramic lizard and leaves. Beaver Galleries. ACT.

5. **Bryan Trueman.**
Large bowl Aerial Series. Wax resist images and poured glazes. Chun, chrome, copper, iron and titanium glazes. 54 cms diameter. Cuppacumbalong Craft Centre, ACT.

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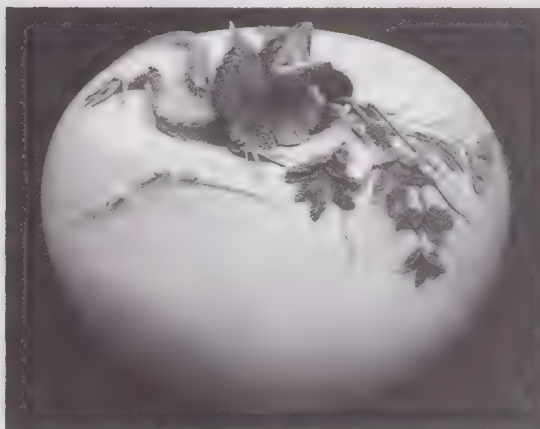
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5



GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Cedar Prest.**
Spinnafex and Ross River Road. Kiln worked antique glass. 750 x 450 mms. 1984. Glass Artists Gallery, Sydney.



2. **Andrea Ebsworth.**
My Coloured Perspective. Left to right, 30 x 30 cms, 35 x 20 cms, 30 x 28 cms. 1984. Blackwood Street Gallery, North Melbourne.

3. **Fran Clark.** *Earrings.* Porcelain, acrylic paint, bamboo sticks, lacquer. 1984. Devise Gallery, Melbourne.

4. **Fran Clark.** *Mumbo Jumbo.* Porcelain, glass, wood, lustre paste, bamboo sticks, acrylic paint. 1984. Devise Gallery, Melbourne.



5. **Alan Watt.** *Dune.* Blackfired with lustre. Crafts Council of ACT. Photo David Reid.

6. **Belinda Ransom.** *Middle Beach.* Miniature woven tapestry. Crafts Council of the ACT. Photo David Reid.

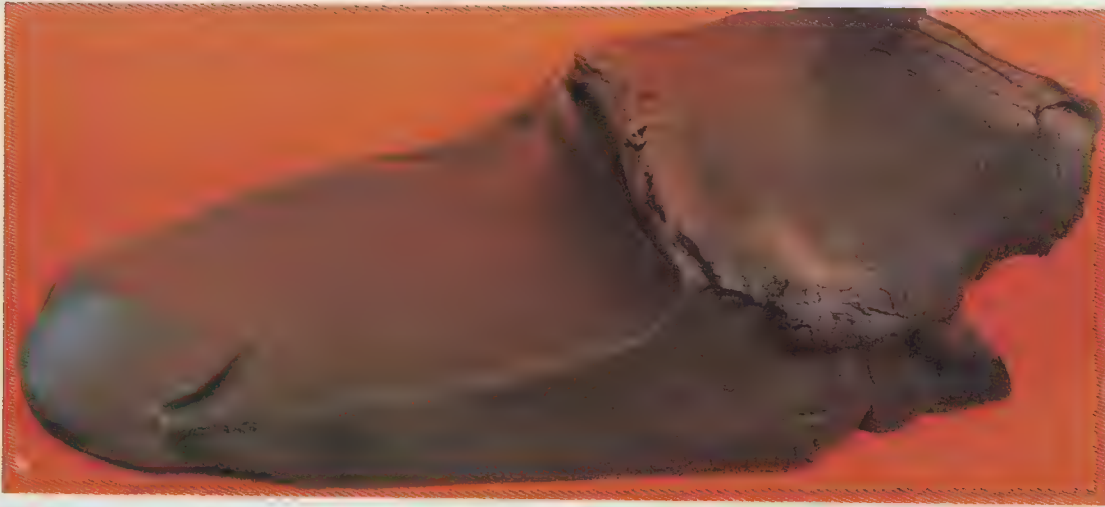
7. **Garry Benson.** 747 *Heat Image.* Wool, linen and silk tapestry. 1984.

8. **Karl Balzer.** *Handstitched briefcase.* Beaver Galleries, ACT. Photo Heide Smith.

9. **Gary Rogers.** *Untitled piece.* Thrown base with handbuilt inlaid top. Salt fired. Jam Factory, SA.



GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS



9



GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Roslyn Porter.** *Tray.*
Earthenware. 13 x
18 x 25 cms.

2. **Sandra Black.**
Pierced Bowl. Bone
china. 15 cms.

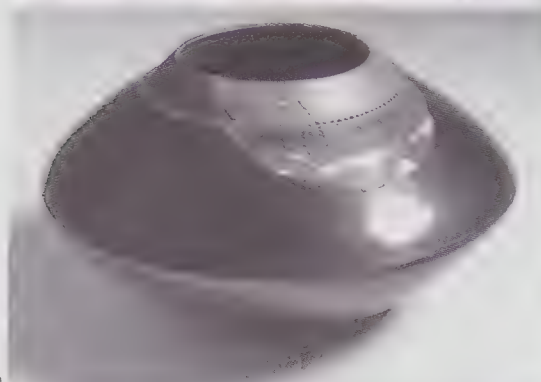
3. **Daniel McCubbin,**
Darling Downs IAE
student. *Low fire*
teaset. Underglaze,
lustre/slips. Cups 16
cms.

4. **Petrus Spronk.**
Burnished Bowl.
Gold leaf. 20 x 30
cms.

5. **Anne Berens.** *Soup*
set. Stoneware.
Tureen 14 x 27 cms.
Cups 14 cms.

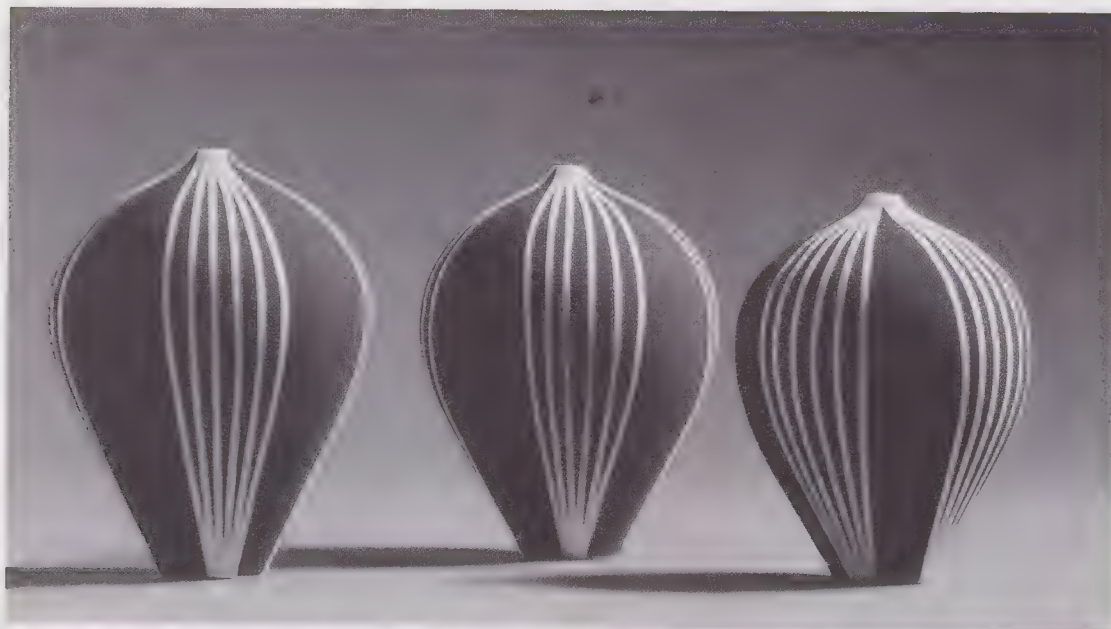
6. **John Teschendorff.**
Altar I-II 1983-84.

National Ceramics Conference



Photos Neil Murray

GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS



1. **Jan Twyerould.** 3
Airbrushed Forms.
Porcelain. 25 x 20
cms.

2. **Penny Smith.** *Store
Unit.* 45 cms high.

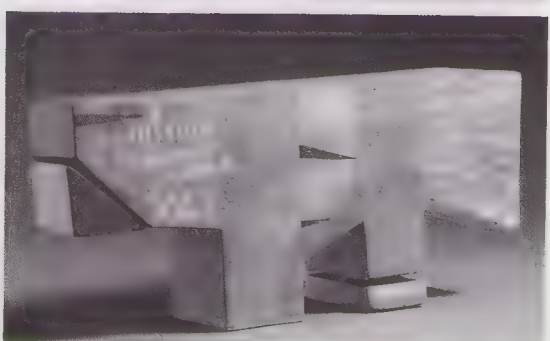
3. **Graeme Wilkie.**
Teapot. 40 x 30
cms.

4. **Lyndal Napper,**
East Sydney
Technical College
student. *Lidded
container.* Stoneware
body, coloured slip.
32 x 20 cms.

5. **Fran Clark.** *Untitled.*
Earthenware. 20 x
45 x 10 cms.

6. **Peter Rushforth.**
The Way.
Stoneware. 350 cms.

National Ceramics Conference



Photos Neil Murray

GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

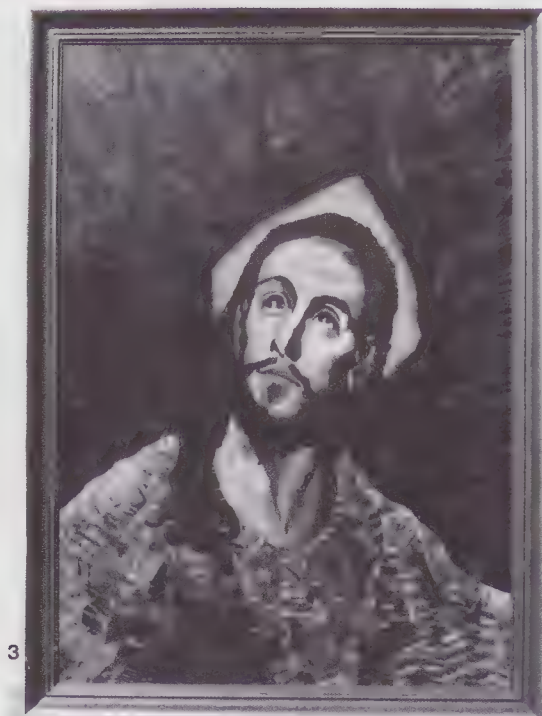
1. **Madeleine Faught.**
Kangeroos cloisonné.
3.5 cms diameter.
Lismore Regional Art
Gallery. Photo John
McCormick.



2. **Dianne Peach.**
Cube. Porcelain,
black and white
dots. 11 x 11 x 11
cms. Narek
Galleries,
Cuppacumbalong,
ACT.



3. **Michael Retter.**
Jesus Christ.
Marquetry.
Marquetarian of the
Year Award,
Marquetry Society of
America.



4. **Solvig Bass**
Becking. *Sea.* Wool,
linen, shaft switch
woven and kilim.
1982. From *For the
Floor* invitational
exhibition, American
Craft Museum, New
York City.



5. **Tarpie Watts.**
Miniature Fibre Form.
Coiled unspun jute,
feathers, seagrass. 9
cms high. Weswal
Gallery, Tamworth.



An Excerpt from 'The Lamp of Beauty'

The Seven Lamps of Architecture by John Ruskin (1848)

One of the strange and evil tendencies of the present day is to the decoration of the railroad station. Now, if there be any place in the world in which people are deprived of that portion of temper and discretion which are necessary to the contemplation of beauty, it is there. It is the very temple of discomfort, and the only charity that the builder can extend to us is to show us, plainly as may be, how soonest to escape from it. The whole system of railroad travelling is addressed to people who, being in a hurry, are therefore, for the time being, miserable. No one would travel in that manner who could help it — who had time to go leisurely over hills and between hedges, instead of through tunnels and between banks: at least those who would, have no sense of beauty so acute as that we need consult it at the station. The railroad is in all its relations a matter of earnest business, to be got through as soon as possible. It transmutes a man from a traveller into a living parcel. For the time he has parted with the nobler characteristics of his humanity for the sake of a planetary power of locomotion. Do not ask him to admire anything. You might as well ask the wind. Carry him safely, dismiss him soon: he will thank you for nothing else. All attempts to please him in any other way are mere mockery, and insults to the things by which you endeavor to do so. There never was more flagrant nor impertinent folly than the smallest portion of ornament in anything concerned with railroads or near them. Keep them out of the way, take them through the ugliest country you can find, confess them the miserable things they are, and spend nothing upon them but for safety and speed. Give large salaries to efficient servants, large prices to good manufacturers, large wages to able workmen; let the iron be tough, and the brickwork solid, and the carriages strong. The time is perhaps not distant when these first necessities may not be easily met: and to increase expense in any other direction is madness. Better bury gold in the embankments, than put it in ornaments on the stations. Will a single traveller be willing to pay an increased fare on the South Western, because the columns of the terminus are covered with patterns from Nineveh? He will only care less for the Ninevite ivories in the British Museum: or on the North Western, because there are old English-looking spandrels to the roof of the station at Crewe? He will only have less pleasure in their prototypes at Crewe House. Railroad architecture has or would have a dignity of its own if it were only left to its work. You would not put rings on the fingers of a smith at his anvil.

A Review of The Seven Lamps of Architecture. By John Ruskin. Smith, Elder, and Co.

Every one sincerely interested in art will be benefited by studying this thoughtful, eloquent book. Its beauties will sink deep in the minds of all who feel that true art is the earnest expression of realities and human sentiments. Such readers will thoroughly sympathise with Mr Ruskin in his denunciations of shams and his advocacy of all open honesties, however humble; and in his aspirations after the 'best' of everything, without compromise. But with very sincere admiration for portions of this work, and for its excellent spirit generally, we think Mr Ruskin is often led to take narrow and half views, especially of many existing and inevitable circumstances which influence art at the present time.

He seems to us to have altogether a very lopsided view of railways and railway architecture, and not to have any consistent theory of mechanical repetition as applied to art. Moreover, instead of boldly recognising the tendencies of the age, which are inevitable, perceiving the wide distribution of certain kinds of art, and the positive good that is in this; — instead of considering the means of improving these tendencies and results, he either puts up his back against their further developement, or would attempt to bring back the world of art to what its course of action was four centuries ago! — as easy a thing as to put the world itself back. Our course in this nineteenth century may be hateful if you please; denounce it, but as it is our course, wise men should recognise the fact, and try, by all the light that God gives them, to direct it rightly. Mr Ruskin talks of adopting a national style of architecture, as a possible conventional arrangement, just as you would adopt a horse or a cotton print.

He marshals four styles for choice. Does he not see that the creation or establishment of a style lies in causes much deeper than men's options? That men have, indeed, no option: that Mr Barry builds this way, Mr Cockerell that, Mr Pugin this, &c., subjected to influences which they have little or no power at all to control. Our space forbids discussion with Mr Ruskin, or we would do so most respectfully. His work is a most useful one, but to understand what shape his eloquent doctrines *practically* take, see his illustrations — dreamy blotches — and his fantastic book-cover. Hating die-work and mechanical repetitions, Mr Ruskin gives us a most original monster, perpetuated by mechanism, we hope, for the sake of the inside of the book, by thousands.

[*Journal of Design*. 1849-50]



Sculptors as Craftsmen

Robert Rooney

If asked to name the best exhibition of 1984, I would reply without hesitation: 'Vienna 1913: Josef Hoffmann's Gallia Apartment' at the National Gallery of Victoria.

In a year dominated by surveys and solo exhibitions of painting, which ended with a massive, unrelieved dose of Australian sculpture, it may seem odd to reserve the highest praise for an exhibition consisting of 100 items, including furniture, silverware, ceramics, glass, textiles and jewellery. These are, after all, craft objects and as such (at least in the eyes of those who believe in the absolute sovereignty of painting and sculpture) do not belong in the lofty realms of 'fine art'.

A model of its kind, 'Vienna 1913' owed much of its success to the careful blending of conventional display methods (objects in glass cases and carpets hung on the walls) and the reconstruction of several of the apartment's rooms. The installation brought the period to life and showed the expertly designed and crafted objects to advantage in a near-natural setting.

Shortly after my enthusiastic review of the Hoffmann show in *The Australian*, I received an invitation from Michael Bogle to write an article for *Craft Australia*. It was in the pages of my complimentary copies of this luxurious magazine that I discovered 'the art versus craft debate'. 'Do you want an argument with a craftsperson?', I read. 'Just ask if they're an artist'. This debate, it appears, has been raging for years and 'it rages still'.

'For artists, there should be no art and craft debate. It is a contentious issue that should not drain one millisecond of an artist's time', says Michael Bogle in one of three articles to appear on the subject. As an artist, I quite agree. However, I can't resist sticking my neck out and making a few comments on this seemingly unresolvable dispute.

To fully appreciate the art of a particular period or movement, it is, I believe, essential to examine all areas of artistic expression (including music and literature) and in particular, those visual arts which are so often relegated to the position of minor or applied/decorative art. These would include handmade and mass-produced objects such as pottery, ceramics and furniture and extend to interior design, fashion, photography, posters, commercial advertising and 'popular' arts. In recent years this has become an acceptable approach in historical exhibitions, of which the large Pompidou surveys and the 'Thirties' exhibition at London's Hayward Gallery are excellent examples.

If all these things contribute to our appreciation of the fine arts (e.g. painting and sculpture), why are distinctions made between the products of a 'fine' artist and those of a 'craftsperson'? That they are made, everyone agrees. But why? And who is to blame?



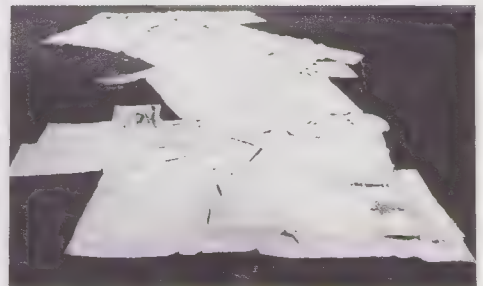
While admitting that the division is an illusion, and 'examples of artists who ignored the debate of art or craft are plentiful', Michael Bogle believes that 'the dichotomy is still perpetuated by art-historical formalism, the critical literature and sloth'. (To which he adds the evil influences of 'rationalism' and 'big science').

The contribution of craft curator Robert Bell, though not quite hysterical, is still colored with highly emotional phrases. The division between art and craft is 'an affliction in this country' and there are 'pockets of shocking snobbishness, discrimination and intolerance in the art world. Quite akin to racism and sexism'. (Craftspersons, it seems, belong to one big happy family). He speaks of 'the caste system' and of craftspersons being treated as 'lepers' and 'untouchables'. He says a lot more, but I can't go on. It's too sad.

What I have learnt from the discussion so far, is that there are on the one hand 'artists' and on the other a separate group of practitioners called 'craftspersons' who have their own magazine (*Craft Australia*) and separate departments in museums which are run by people like Robert Bell. Equal or not, both groups have the same ambitions. Both desire public acceptance, critical recognition and financial support and are inclined to whinge a lot when these things are denied them. But what about artists (again, painters and sculptors) who make or design craft or mass-produced objects?

In his article, Michael Bogle states that 'artists [unlike art-historians] do not innately have this confusion about [the status of] art and craft' and he uses the example of certain 'privileged artists' to prove his point. 'I can find no evidence that Gauguin was embarrassed with his ceramics. Oscar Kokoschka shows no shyness about his decorated fans and tapestry cartoons for the *Wiener Werkstatte*. Frank Lloyd Wright never concealed his clothing designs nor did Kandinsky hide his embroideries'. To this rather selective list, we could add the applied/decorative arts of Picasso, Nash, Rodchenko, Nixon, Arkley, Kozic, Meadmore, Boyd, Perceval, Preston, Bacon, Lichtenstein and many more.

The fact that many artists are willing to try their hand at making craft objects seems to suggest the folly (in the West, at least) of dividing the arts into specialised categories. (For an ironic comment on such divisions we need look no further than Roy Lichtenstein's *Dinnerware Objects*. They are sculptures of cups and saucers that look like reproductions of craft objects and are 'mass-produced' in editions of 800). I am not alone in thinking that the best original prints, for example, are those made by artists as an adjunct to their normal activities. (A visit to any Print Council exhibition will confirm this). I suspect that the same applies to other areas such as craft.



So, at the risk of offending Australia's busy multitude of craftspersons, I would say that is they (and, perhaps, the craft-oriented academics) who are prolonging the art versus craft debate and not the artists.

Having a wide, but selective, interest in the crafts/decorative arts of artists and the (sometimes unfairly) less exulted products of craftspersons, I went along to the exhibition 'Sculptors as Craftsmen' at Melbourne's Meat Market Craft Centre, expecting to find a display of craft-objects which would perhaps prove the futility of fussy distinctions between art and craft. I should have known better, because what I found was yet another boring exhibition of sculpture attached, like so many at the time, to the 'Second Australian Sculpture Triennial'. The only difference being that some of the works I had already seen in art galleries were now to be found in a craft centre reminiscent of a Royal Show pavilion. (A central exhibition space flanked on either side by 'pens' in which craftspersons were hard at it).

The works (by 26 sculptors) were chosen by Michael Young 'to best represent attitudes related to the association of materials/techniques and concepts/ideas in three dimensional art'. His intentions, if not the results, are not so far from my expectations. They are to highlight 'the problems resulting from academic or institutional categorisation of three-dimensional arts activities in Australia', and to hope that 'these assembled works will advance the appreciation of the need for interrelationship of the arts one step further'.

Although Young's selection doesn't have that 'magic' which, if we are to believe Robert Bell, will bring eternal peace and equality between all artists and craftspersons, it does demonstrate that sculptors (as opposed to painters) do indeed share certain materials, techniques and concepts with those exhibitors whose works, according to the catalogue biographies, are normally seen in what Young calls 'a craft circle of influence', and who 'often have a need to divert themselves from production or functional ware occasionally or forever'. I should add that Young makes a distinction between sculptors and 'artists' with 'a definite craft training in ceramics, wood, textiles, jewellery etc.'.

Bill Gregory is an artist with a background in ceramics whose works are usually shown in an art rather than a craft context. His ceramic sculpture *I Think the Eyes Have It* is a witty hybrid that seems to parody the division between art and craft by means of an eccentric structure of tiered bowl-like forms atop a tall cylindrical base.

Young's selection placed particular emphasis on the work of sculptors who use ceramic materials. The

range of styles and techniques used in these works was wide enough to include not only Gregory's pot-like sculpture, but also the smoothly glazed *terra cotta* portrait of *Joyce with Tigers* by Lorriane Jenyns, the tombstone territory social comments of Mark Thompson (using mixtures of fired stoneware and earthenware clays), and Christopher Langton's simulations of reinforced *Whelan the Wrecker* rubble in stoneware, steel and timber. Another reference to the building site was to be found in Barry Mills's tall scaffold-like scrap-timber construction, which, to judge from the circumstances of its creation, was probably assembled from materials found on the site of the new Rialto.

According to Stephen Wickham, his assemblages of found objects 'are connected with the tradition of shamanism and contemporary shams [pretence]', while his *Angel's House* is as much a comment on the sculptural cult of 'sticks and stones' as a parody of traditional iconography. He is, I suspect, referring to the work of John Davis and his twig-happy followers. Davis was represented by *Flag Named Place*, a sprawling mixed media floor piece consisting of sewn canvas, twigs, feathers and such. Begun in 1978, it threatens to grow even larger.

Mitsuo Shoji used burnt wood and clay for his floor piece. Its central image, a wire mesh cube, was covered with unfired clay slip which he had allowed to spread around the base in a solidified puddle. But someone left an ugly footprint among the 'controlled accidents', the cracked surface and exposed mesh.

Maybe I was influenced by the exhibition's craft centre setting, but I found myself cataloguing the various materials and techniques used in each exhibit and of course, I had to admit that all of the artists certainly knew their craft. Not that there weren't some hideous, even silly pieces among the works on display. For instance, there was Tanja and Graham Carr's rawhide and leather *Voyage* (why it should take two people to create such corn is beyond me) and Gary Greenwood's nouveau/baroque leather musical instruments have a slight touch of the Franco Cozzo's which is not to my taste.

'Sculptors as Craftsmen', to quote the Meat Market's Marjorie Johnson, addressed 'the relationship between creative sculptural form and fine craftsmanship . . . while striving to broaden the base of craft practice in Australia'. In the end, all it succeeded in doing was to prove that fine craftsmanship is no more a guarantee of artistic 'quality' and 'excellence', than a lack of craftsmanship is a sign of creativity.

Robert Rooney writes regularly on Art for The Australian. He is also a noted painter.

1. Tanja and Graham Carr. *Voyager*. Rawhide and timber.
2. Bill Gregory. *I Think The Eyes Have It*. 100 x 70 cms. Ceramic, timber, glass, enamels. 1984.
3. Lorriane Jenyns. *Joyce with Tigers*. Glazed *terra cotta*. 1984.
4. Mitsuo Shoji. *Untitled Construction*. Wood (burnt), clay. 1984.
5. John Davis. *Flag Renamed Place*. Mixed media. 1978-84.

The Crafts Board

making the wheel turn a bit faster

Jenny Stewart

It is now just on a decade since the Whitlam Labor government established the Australia Council as the Commonwealth's chief funding and advisory body for the arts. The Council absorbed pre-existing arts funding bodies and programmes at the federal level and set up a number of Boards to handle funding decisions for different artistic media. It was central to the philosophy which created the Australia Council that arts funding should be at 'arm's length', that is, decisions about who was to get what and why were to be in the hands, not of politicians, but of experts within each artistic field: practitioners, teachers and other authorities.

Today, there are eight Boards of the Australia Council, including the Crafts Board. For the crafts, having a separate board (rather than being part of the Visual Arts Board, or, as in the United Kingdom, funded bureaucratically) was something of a coup and a tribute to the persistence of craftspeople and enthusiasts who wanted the crafts treated as distinctive art forms in their own right. The Crafts Board itself has eight part-time members; the positions are advertised publicly and appointments made by the Minister for the Arts. Care is taken to ensure that the Board has a balanced representation of regions and craft forms. In addition to its members, the Board has a full-time support staff, consisting of 4 project officers, headed by a Director. The project officers and Director do not decide applications for assistance, that task is performed by Board members themselves, assisted by outside experts. The Board's staff do, however, have a considerable role to play, ranging from day-to-day administration and information giving, to making policy recommendations and submissions on funding.

The Crafts Board has four main objectives. They are to

- sustain and improve the quality of crafts in Australia;
- promote knowledge and appreciation of the crafts;
- encourage participation in crafts activities in all sections of the community; and
- promote Australian crafts nationally and internationally.

Just how much has the Board achieved?

Everything needed to be done

In the early days, as David Williams, the Board's present Director says, the Crafts Board 'did everything because everything needed to be done'. Opportunities for craftspeople to train and develop as full-time, professional artists were almost non-existent; crafts organisations, many of them still in their infancy, were hampered by a lack of resources. In the popular perception, craftspeople were quaint eccentrics, rather than artists. Craft objects were not displayed in art galleries, but instead gathered dust in the decorative arts departments of museums.

In these circumstances, where money and resources were desperately needed, and needed quickly, the Board channelled a large part of its funds through the organisations recently formed by craftspeople themselves, the Crafts Councils of Australia. The

impact was dramatic. Within a few years, not only had a national crafts 'infrastructure' emerged, but State arts authorities had considerably expanded their funding (in some cases from a baseline of nil) to State Crafts Councils. At this point, the Board decided to devote a much larger proportion of its resources to the support of individual, professional craftspeople.

Although controversial at the time, this decision was inevitable, given the continuing difficulties craftspeople were finding in buying equipment, establishing workshops, learning new techniques and keeping up with new ideas in their fields. For the potter Janet Mansfield, the Board's support for craft professionals has been one of its key achievements. 'It's possible now to be a craftsperson as a vocation', she says. 'I'm sure that if there had not been a Crafts Board of the Australia Council and crafts had been covered by, say, the Visual Arts Board, that crafts in this country would not have grown to the extent, or have the credibility they do now'.

Myths and legends

Despite very real support for the Board from the professional crafts community, it is the professional development grants that generate continuing controversy. According to David Williams, 'myths and legends' have grown up which bear no relation to the facts. One of the most enduring myths, he says, is that grants go disproportionately to a few individuals or to full-time college lecturers who simply don't need the money. Williams points out that there are clear eligibility criteria for grants to individuals and one of them is that 'applicants should be working substantially full-time at their craft'. Nor, according to Williams, does the Board continue to fund people year after year. 'There are always risks in subsidy, but most of the risks we've taken have paid off', he says. 'If people aren't on about personal initiative, doing it themselves, we're not interested.'

. . . It's possible now to be a craftsperson as a vocation . . .

Despite the explicitness of funding criteria, the working parties which decide grant applications (particularly in the individual categories) have an unenviable task. There are always more applicants than there is money to go around. According to Moira Kerr, senior project officer with the Crafts Board, once craftspeople are involved in the process of selection, they rapidly develop a 'national perspective' on their responsibilities. This no doubt helps to explain the commonly held view in the crafts community that 'something happens' to simple, uncomplicated craftspeople when they are inducted into Board activities.

Perhaps because the Crafts Board has always had to battle for its place in the sun, its policies, philosophies and priorities are more clearly articulated than is the case for other Australia Council Boards which take the pre-eminence of their particular art form for granted. Crafts practitioners of all kinds number in the

hundreds of thousands, and yet the Crafts Board received in 1984-85 only 5% of the total Australia Council budget. While this represented a 15.8% increase on the 1983-84 allocation, (the largest percentage increase of all Boards), David Williams acknowledges that there is still much to do in building arguments for improved funding in the future.

Values

Central to these arguments is what Williams calls the 'values' of the crafts. In a society dominated by machine production, crafts represent a 'way back' for people to rediscover their capacity for self expression. These values of personal skill and imaginative effort are, Williams says, really needed 'if society is to make sense of itself'. This interpretative and expressive aspect of crafts practice is, Williams believes, the key to further development of crafts. It is for this reason that the Board favours innovative projects which are relevant to contemporary society, rather than supporting traditional activities for their own sake. Moira Kerr believes some craft groups have missed out on opportunities to develop themselves by not opening themselves to new influences. This is why the Board's assistance to community craft groups stresses creative development (through, for example, contact with a professional crafts person) rather than support for the familiar and habitual.

Any idea that the Crafts Board occupies a 'niche' between, say, the Visual Arts Board on the one hand, and the Community Arts Board on the other, is firmly rejected by David Williams. 'That's a traditional perception', he says. 'We would argue that the role the crafts have played in the 1970s is pre-eminent in the practice of the visual arts in Australia'. Certainly, the willingness of the Board to back unusual projects or projects which fitted into no convenient category has given a 'start' to artists who later received support from the Visual Arts Board. Judging from the range of activities for which grants have been given (laser techniques to very mixed, mixed media), there are very few ideas that would be ruled 'out of bounds'.

Confusion

Despite its clear sense of its own identity, however, the Board does have a problem in communicating that identity to outsiders, both within and without the crafts community. Confusion with the Crafts Councils, with state government funding authorities and with the arts councils, is endemic. Despite the energetic travelling of project officers, working in offices in a tower block in North Sydney accentuates remoteness, particularly from regional and interstate groups.

In part, this confusion stems from one of the great strengths of the crafts movement, the extent of its 'grass roots' support. The Crafts Board, as David Williams is the first to point out, is one body among many. He points to a diagram showing the many levels and layers of the crafts scene. 'We are that dot there', he says, indicating the Crafts Board. 'That's the perspective we operate in'.

The Crafts Board's philosophies have, in general, served it well in negotiating the complexities of this environment. It has aroused some controversy, but being a funding rather than funded body, that is probably inevitable. In fact, in the turbulent field of arts funding, the Crafts Board appears to operate in an atmosphere of remarkable consensus.

It is unfortunate for the Board that some of its most important work, such as lobbying all levels of government on behalf of the crafts, goes unnoticed and unreported. The Board's policies, too, have had an influence which goes beyond their immediate application. There can be no doubt, though, that the Board has played a vital role in the transformation of the crafts scene in Australia. Courses in crafts at colleges of technical and further education are the rule

rather than the exception and art schools with a strong crafts orientation, such as the Canberra School of Art, have been established. More and more people are becoming attracted to the crafts and are developing into full-time professionals. Crafts which scarcely existed or had almost died out in the early 1970s, glass art, leather art and some types of woodwork, are now flourishing.

Quality

What of the quality of craft work being produced? General assessments are impossible when craftworks are so diverse and produced for reasons ranging from the aesthetic to the therapeutic. Craft criticism, moreover, remains tentative and theoretically undeveloped. Crafts Board member Tom Arthur agrees that criticism is one of the 'big gaps' in the crafts scene, but points out that for most practitioners, making a living leaves little time for the nurture of critics. This is unfortunate, because without a new critical awareness, the artistic significance of community-oriented projects (such as Cedar Prest's Araluen windows or the South Sydney *Visual History* project) may never be appreciated.

Popular acceptance, however, always a sturdy guide, is growing rapidly. A craft object, formed from materials familiar to most people in their daily lives, is more accessible than a painting or a piece of music. People are not afraid of crafts, giving artists magnificent opportunities to communicate. Most of them, provided they avoid the temptations of novelty and obscurity for their own sake, seem to be using these opportunities.

... the Crafts Board appears to operate in an atmosphere of remarkable consensus ...

The extent of the Crafts Board's influence on the type of work being produced is difficult to discern. It has funded traditional artists and *avant-garde* artists and artists at all points in between. The Board does not see itself as an arbiter of taste. Rather, its role has been that of a catalyst, 'making the wheel turn a bit faster', as David Williams puts it. Moreover, its emphasis on eventual self-sufficiency for those it supports prevents the growth of the 'grants cult' which has so distorted priorities in other art forms.

The future

Nevertheless, there are problems ahead for the Board. Striking the right balance between the needs of professional craftspeople and the far more numerous craft hobbyists will, with expectations so much greater than in the past, become even more difficult. The degree of activism is a problem, too. Should the Board engage in 'entrepreneurial' projects such as the recent *Craftworks in Australian Architecture* exhibition, or should it leave such ventures to the crafts community itself? The Board itself believes that it has a responsibility to find and develop new opportunities for craftspeople to sell their work. Does it also have a responsibility to develop critical writing about the crafts, even if this means less funds for practitioners? How far the Board wants its practical responsibilities to extend will be important questions for the late 1980s.

So far, the Crafts Board seems to have got its priorities fairly right, and deserves its reputation as one of the fairest Boards of the Australia Council. With so much already achieved, the challenges of the next decade will be more subtle, but no less important.

Jenny Stewart is a Research Scholar in the Department of Political Science at the Australian National University.

GREG COLLINS. *Fremantle Arts Centre Fremantle, W.A.*
2 – 26 May 1985.

Understated excellence is the impression gained from Greg Collins' *Variations on the Wooden Bowl*. The bowls are made from a variety of timbers collected from the forest areas of the state's south west region, silky oak, she-oak, jarrah, blackboy, peppermint and banksias. Woods rich in grain pattern with a wide range of subtle colourings. These attributes are beautifully realised in the skilled handling brought to each piece.

Greg uses the technique of hollow turning and as the pieces are relatively large considerable skill must be required. The pieces are sculptural in form with the shapes more like those of ceramic pots than the heavier based forms associated with salad bowls. Most of the pieces are of an enclosed form with a small opening at the top, shapes which exploit the wood's particular grain and colour. For example the round jarrah bowls made from the burl of the tree, and the she-oak bowl with its extraordinary striated grain resembling thin wheat stalks fanning out from a narrow base. Patches of deep red and warm browns glow from the polished surfaces.

Each piece reveals Greg's aesthetic awareness of his medium.

Robyn Taylor is a Senior Tutor, School of Art & Design, W.A.I.T.

LYN TUNE. *Galerie Düsseldorf Perth.* 26 April – 19 May, 1985.

A contemporary jeweller in every sense, Lyn Tune presents us with her latest collection of junk jewellery, costumes and objects in an exhibition titled *Timesteps*.

Fashioned from readily available and not so precious materials her pieces reflect the throw-away society, ephemeral fashion tastes and popular cultural imagery. Her work is accessible to everyone. One doesn't need to be wealthy to afford her 'gems' made in fake fur, neoprene rubber, brass and diamanté, but then not everyone could wear *Bikey Shoulders*, a *Fluoro Daysign* neckpiece or a *Chanteline*, a wide hip belt with attachments to hold your gun, knife, wallet or make-up purse.

The costume pieces come with attractively painted hangers, and together they create delightful sculptural mobiles. Like the *Chanteline* which is exhibited on the wall, these costumes double as functional and non-functional objects. You can wear them and/or exhibit them.

Overall the exhibition is exciting and fun. A sense of wit and humour is a recurring theme: *Susan decides that Superwoman does not wash up* or *Aussie Crown Jewels* brooches in acrylic and diamanté. A pity though that no one checked the catalogue for all those spelling mistakes or are they part of the contemporary look?

Robyn Taylor is a Senior Tutor, School of Art and Design, W.A.I.T.

JILL SMITH CERAMICS. *Hogarth Galleries, Sydney.*
20 April – 8 May, 1985.

What happens when two things which absolutely cannot exist together are impossibly forced to meet? is a question posed in Jill Smith's work. The collision of images from formal art, the cinema and adventure comic books signify her concerns for the limited means of expression that has, as she sees it, restricted artists working in ceramics. In this post-Warhol era, the stretching of meaning of easily recognized images has become commonplace, but Smith's work miraculously avoids the *cliché*. Her thoughtful approach and fine execution allow each piece to realise its full expressive potential. Her vessels bearing torsos and heads become sculptures of a sort, yet still fit into the traditional category of clay pots. Masks and sunglasses shroud the heads in an attempt at concealment. The artist herself mediates the public arena via her alter ego *Blanche Blancmange*. Witty and invigorating, Jill Smith's work challenges assumptions about the weight of meaning a 'simple' pot can carry.

Pam Thorne is a Sydney crafts enthusiast.

HELJA PURSALU, WINTER COLLECTION '85. *Narek Galleries, Cuppacumbalong, ACT.* 1 – 12 May, 1985.

To achieve subtle tones which best suit handspun wools Helja Pursalu has used natural bush dyes to complement the fabrics, woven from handspun wools. Perhaps in an effort to broaden their

appeal, these soft shades, extracted from acacias, eucalypts and other bushes, were juxtaposed with brash commercial colours. The result was an unsatisfying combination which would probably attract neither end of the market.

The weave was very tight providing practical and robust clothes. Handcrafted leather and stone buttons completed the rustic character and harmonised with the bush dyes, but, it seemed to me, incompatible with tailored garments, especially those incorporating both handspun and commercial wools. Particularly attractive I found was an open textured shawl which successfully combined both wools. Large enough to be practical, it retained a close tactile relationship with the fleece. I found it harder to appreciate the ponchos, jackets and jerkins because of a lack of imagination in their style, especially those woven with harsh bright colours. Although the skill was self evident, the flair for design was missing.

Sue Flutter is currently researching an Honours Thesis at the Department of Fine Arts, ANU, Canberra.

GARRY GREENWOOD. *Bonython — Meadmore Gallery, Adelaide.*
27 April – 22 May, 1985.

What hits one's eye upon entering Garry Greenwood's exhibition at Bonython — Meadmore Gallery is a pair of mesh-encased, very female legs straining from within a leather prison. Beautifully crafted, seductively sensual in terms of texture, but, *yawn*, not the old female stereotype, I'm-a-legs-man-myself, depiction again?

But if we ignore the life-sized, realistic body parts, a really exciting sensual and erotic exhibition emerged. That was provided by Greenwood's leather musical instruments and foot sculptures — or were they inhabited shoes? Fantastic, medieval follies, these shoes featuring wildly exaggerated winkle-pickers with bells on the tips were neither shoes nor merely decorated feet; they were 'a dream of shoes' as might be suggested by the fantastic poetry of Lautremont. The delicious curves and smoothly rendered surfaces were echoed in the musical instruments which, despite the fact that they can, in fact, be played, visually represented concepts about the aesthetics of musical form. In discarding the 'vulgar' and obvious leg fetish, this artist could reveal an intense and an even more exciting (if quirky) realm of erotica.

Pamela Zeplin Waite is an Adelaide art critic and writer.

ANNIE HOLDSWORTH, *Jam Factory, Adelaide.* 24 March – 19 April, 1985.

The Constructivist tradition has at last hit Adelaide. Within a month, not only has Adelaide played host to the eminent Polish historian of Russian vanguard art, Dr. Szymon Bojko, but has also featured an exhibition of jewellery, Constructivist style, by Annie Holdsworth.

However, whereas the original Russian use of geometry to articulate *avant-garde* art was revolutionary 60 years ago, Holdsworth's reinterpretation is considerably more cautious and restrained.

Traditionally, jewellery has occupied a less radical position in art and this show, for all its meticulous finesse holds no surprises. In keeping with the art-into-life aesthetic, Holdsworth uses non-precious materials, plastics, slate, copper and paint to make jewellery intended for non-precious (or non-traditional) areas of the body such as thighs, shoulders and upper arms.

On occasions, crispness and finish of line is spoiled by unresolved corners and *impedimenti*, paint touch-ups, which detract from a slick presentation. At present, Holdsworth's work shows radical potential but in remaining too self-consciously tasteful, it doesn't quite attain its promise.

Pamela Zeplin Waite is an Adelaide art critic and writer.

WEAVE: WOVEN FIBRE IMAGES. *Fine Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart.* 12 March – 4 April.

This exhibition combines the work of eight weavers.

Both Nola Jones and Gabriel Rosati show pieces which, by scale alone, demand attention, but only Jones appears to have real control over media and message. Rosati's works seem unnecessarily confused. The same is true of Sue Rosenthal's

faithful rendition of the Lynn Collins' painting *Chile*: a lack of differentiation in surface treatment between the ugly and the beautiful aspects of the subject left me unsatisfied after initial attraction. I found Michael Butler's exploded weavings too simplistic, although silk cross-threads relieved otherwise somewhat stark wooden grids. Stephanie Radke's wall-hangings were discordant, perhaps deliberately so, due to her use of strident colour.

The works of the remaining three weavers have a number of common elements. All evoke memories of small, treasured objects or events. Lise Cruikshank's exquisitely detailed excerpts from life (or *possible lives*), Paul Harvey's funerary *Offering 2*, and Bruce Carnie's tokens and small fragments or mementos, are all reminiscent of other times and places.

The exhibition is an interesting overview of current directions in Australian weaving.

Susan Malm is a graduate of the Tasmanian School of Art (Ceramics Major) 1983, and a contributor to **Craft Tasmania**.

HUGH McLACHLAN, JEWELLERY. *Handmark Gallery, Hobart.* 10 – 28 March, 1985.

Hugh McLachlan presents a series of bold thematic brooches and bracelets in which he deals with two distinct themes: the circus and the Kelly legend.

The second of these themes translates, with some success, aspects of Kelly's career into a series of finely carved timber arm-rings. In his choice of timber, however, McLachlan has erred. Such a rough and ready hero surely requires a less silky and golden vehicle than Huon pine; perhaps a more weathered timber would have been more appropriate. Also somewhat arbitrary is McLachlan's use of large flat sections of highly polished brass which bear little relation to either the forms on which they sit, or the subject.

This apparently arbitrary use of jewellery media has, however, been resolved in the other main series, the circus pieces. In these objects precious metal elements add life to the characters, and the use of heavily figured Huon pine and blackwood echoes elaborately patterned costumes.

McLachlan is using timbers that have been called 'precious'. In doing so, he questions our understanding of preciousness as it relates to expected and less-expected jewellery media.

Susan Malm.

GRAHAM STONE. *Glass Artists Gallery, Paddington.* 24 April – 19 May, 1985.

Graham Stone's glassware makes clear statements about city living, the drug trade and the horrors of bushfire. Both the issues and the effects are made manifest in the best of these works.

People in Glass Houses is a sculptural treatment of the city scape. Shapes like inverted test tubes contain bullets, a syringe, a pill, modern buildings and twig-like figures like hostages straining to escape transparent shells. It alludes to the frustration and isolation of city life, the escape into drugs and the sterile appearance of modern cities.

Another work entitled *Growth Industry* is a glass relief sculpture of a drug addict's eye, complete with tiny pupil, a syringe and a tiny silvery top hat implicating capitalism as the source of the problem. Although this is a hackneyed idea, Stone has expressed it potently in this work.

Other works which were well executed but not brimming with ideas were two bowls *White Heat* and *Ring of Fire*.

Stone's use of quivering nerve-like figures and the nerves of the eye, articulate well the vulnerability of humankind in the face of these issues.

Johanna Fischbein is a Sydney art historian.

DEBORAH HALPERN. *Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne.* April 1985.

The policy of a high percentage of mainstream art galleries in Melbourne has been to have a definite distinction between the

crafts and the arts with a particular reticence to integrate the two. However, for as long as this policy has been in practice, the exception to the rule has also prospered.

One recent example occurred when the Christine Abrahams Gallery presented a series of works from painter/ceramist Deborah Halpern. Deborah's works are difficult to categorize as she merges her talents as a ceramist to sculptural heights whilst adorning the surface with wild confident painterly marks.

These iconic works, often phallic in proportions, have made definite steps beyond the coffee cup conservatism adopted by many of her contemporaries. Although I wouldn't go so far as to say that the works appeal on an aesthetic scale, they do possess a quality I often recall when confronted with exhibits of North American Indian totems or South Pacific fertility gods. Basically it's a feeling of seduction matched with suspicion.

I have found that her works are well worth seeking out as they take a positive stab at the problem of finding that happy medium between traditional craft and art prejudices.

Virginia Swan is a student in fine arts at RMIT.

MARTIN KELLY, *Victor Mace Fine Art Gallery, Brisbane.* 19-30 April, 1985

Martin Kelly's series of simple traditionally Japanese-shaped *shino*-glazed forms is impressive in its continuity of materials and attitude. Softly squared bowls and mallet-shaped jars with dark abstract patterning of grids and dot series are coated with a white grey *shino*. They are cold and insular in a not unpleasant manner. Each work stands alone with an interesting dominance of the surrounding space. The glaze quality is disturbing, being granular, almost sugary on some pieces with a jagged edge created in the crevice of a figure-eight-shaped bottle.

Martin has included four ash-glazed jars displayed separately that show the maker's diversity yet continuing dedication to traditional attitudes of claywork and the associated skills and techniques.

A worry is the total acceptance of the validity of the traditional Japanese approval and delight in chance effects. Can this also be used as an excuse for work that doesn't quite come up to scratch?

The pieces exhibited are practical objects in the main and therefore have an added comfort and beauty. The work represents a part in a continuing investigation of the craftsman into his craft.

Stephanie Outridge Field is a graduate and post graduate of Sydney College of the Arts (majoring in ceramics), currently a potter.

KIAT SNG. *The Potters' Gallery, Brisbane.* April 12-May 1, 1985

Kiat's exhibition is actually three or four exhibitions in one. The common denominator is Kiat's use of the various surfaces as vehicles for his delicately coloured 'paintings'. His abstract imagery involves the layering of wispy veils and networks of slips, glazes, stains and lustres. All applied as a painter would his paints.

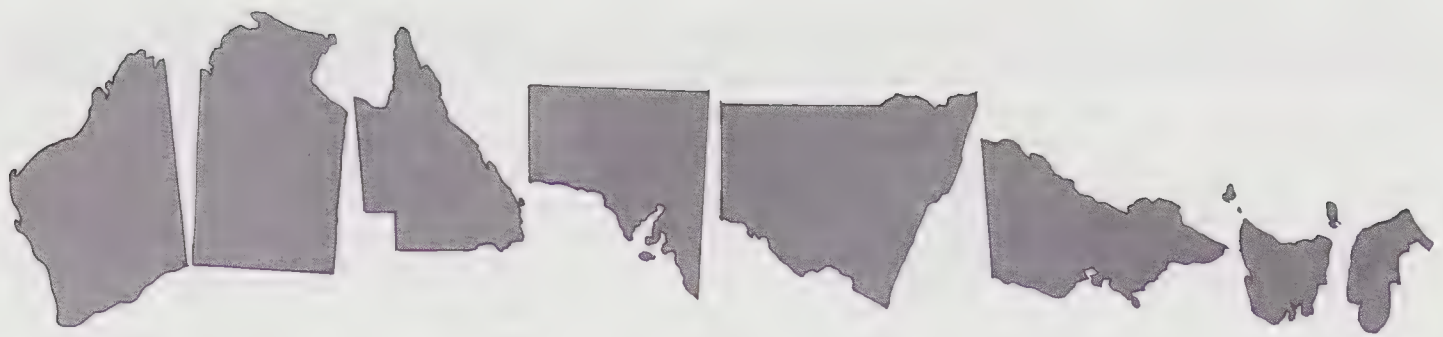
Exhibited are thrown works, glazed and pitfired, tiles and works on paper. The tiles are most appealing, one in particular has a delicate soft apricot framing of iron slip with a blue-grey-green image just crossing the boundary of the frame with a silver web of lines overriding the entire surface.

Small monoprints of blue and green have a sense of landscape. The tile series show a freedom of line and space with a painterly attitude to both concept and manufacture. The more complex the works the more compelling they are.

Also exhibited are a series of gentle spherical forms which have been burnished and pitfired. The rims have been distorted to soften the forms and allow the characteristics of the firing to be presented well.

Kiat excels at the more abstract and complex surface decoration with simple forms acting as a foil. It would be interesting to see Kiat decide on a particular format for further investigation.

Stephanie Outridge Field is a graduate and post graduate of Sydney College of the Arts (majoring in ceramics), currently a potter.



Crafts Council Calendar

Western Australia

1st Floor, Perth City Railway Station,
Wellington Street, Perth, 6000
Tel: 327 2799

12 September – 6 October. Pots. Exhibition of ceramics by Phillip Douglas, Bela Kotai, Greg Crowe, Garry Zeck.

9 – 27 October. Indian Exhibition. To be confirmed.

30 October – 24 November. Metals and Other Things. Diana Anderson.

1 – 11 December. Graduate Show. Students from Perth Technical College.

27 November – 24 December. Crafts for Christmas.

Tasmania

77 Salamanca Place, Hobart, 7000
Tel: 23 5622

September. Basketry '85 workshop and exhibition.

October. Lynn Tune jewellery exhibition.

October. Robyne Hill leather workshop.

22 – 26 October. Royal Hobart Show Stand.

November. Janet Mansfield ceramics.

11 – 29 November. *Characters in Craft* exhibition featuring any hand-made characters, with an emphasis on puppets, kites and dolls.

November. Jenny Davidson puppetry workshop.

December. Christmas exhibition.

3rd School Term. *New Making It Too* exhibition designed for schools during the Year of the Youth.

Crafts Council Window Display featuring craft from high schools and matriculation colleges. *Accent on Youth* in 1985.

Australian Capital Territory

1 Aspinall Street, Watson, 2602
Tel: 41 2373

29 August – 15 September. The Office Environment.

25 September – 13 October. The Kimono Show.

18 – 23 October. Exhibition Bimbimbi Ceramic Group.

November/December. Woodcraft Group of ACT annual exhibition.

November/December. New Earthenware.

Victoria

7 Blackwood Street, Nth Melbourne, 3051
Tel: 329 8856, 329 8719

26 October. Final Crafts as a Business Conference.

18 November - 8 December. The English speaking Union Stuart Devlin Award. Meat Market Craft Centre.

Northern Territory

Bullocky Point, Fannie Bay, 5790
Tel: 81 6615, 81 6616

September. Monnie Senner. Advanced spinning workshop. Alice Springs 6, 7, 8 September.

September. Penny Amberg. Leather workshop. Darwin 20, 21, 22 September.

South Australia

169 Payneham Road, St Peters, 5069
Tel: 42 4001

Venues and dates not yet finalised. Travelling Suitcase Exhibitions, which include: Stitch in Pine, Bend Belly and Shoulder, To Whom It May Concern.

Queensland

School of Arts Building, 166 Ann Street, Brisbane, 4000
Tel: 229 2661

12 – 25 October. Gold Coast 4th National Ceramics Art Award Exhibition.

New South Wales

100 George Street, The Rocks, Sydney, 2000
Tel: 279 126

17 August – 8 September. *Ornamental Sources*. An exhibition of rich and decorative ceramics, fabric, jewellery, paper. Crafts Council Centre Gallery.

14 September – 6 October. *The Essential Object*. An exhibition of ceramics, wood, jewellery, book arts, weaving. Crafts Council Centre Gallery.

12 October – 10 November. *The Bauhaus Model Modernism*. An exhibition of furniture, clocks, ceramics, jewellery. Crafts Council Centre Gallery.

Year of the Youth travelling exhibition. Touring NSW from September 1985 for twelve months. Contact Jan Irvine, CCNSW.

Through the Looking Glass travelling exhibition of stained glass panels:

18 September – 1 October, Albury Regional Art Centre.

16 – 29 October, Griffith Regional Art Gallery.

13 – 26 November, Tamworth City Art Gallery.

Books

Susan Thompson
Reviews Coordinator



Richard Ball & Peter Campbell

Master Pieces Richard Ball and Peter Campbell. Blandford Press, 1984. 144 pp colour and black and white photography and line diagrams \$23.95

Have you ever thought of making *Captain Duck's Settee*, Pablo Picasso's *Still Life Sideboard* or Hieronymous Bosch's *Miser's Chest*? If you have but lacked encouragement or know how, this book is for you.

Richard Ball and Peter Campbell have commissioned woodworkers and sculptors to build improbable items of furniture 'lifted' from selected art masterpieces. The concept is both cheeky and clever. Their recipe is to admire a painting and then make the furniture item depicted in it. Whether the furniture is leant on by a king or a pauper, half obscured by a passionate scene or relegated to a postage stamp area in the background is of no consequence.

This assembled array ranges from an obviously uncomfortable Pieter Breughel stool and a potentially uncomfortable Fra Angelica platform bed to a delightful Cézanne *Card Table* and a lush Vittorie Carpaccio *St. Augustine's Armchair*. My favourite is Vincent Van Gogh's simple rush chair with its evocation of sunny Provence and Vincent's hope for a brighter life.

This book will satisfy the advanced woodworker and supply much valuable information to the amateur. The authors have gone to great pains to supply clear construction drawings. Plans and elevations are supplemented by pictorial diagrams of construction methods. Measurements are not metricated so out with the good old folding boxwood inch rule. Step by step instructions make all the items possible and the authors often cajole their reader to be creative and attempt alternative interpretations and methods of making the given projects.

Another feature is the author's determination to teach us ignorant woodbutchers some art history. Each item of furniture is explained in its historical context: perhaps its social significance, its reflection of a particular style or its influence on the evolution of interior design. For example René Magritte's *Humanoid Table* from the painting *Difficult Crossing* receives the following introduction:

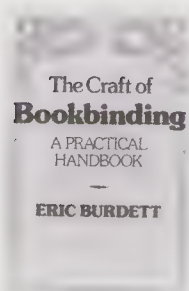
'Magritte's table is a surreal contribution to the old and odd tradition of humanoid furniture, which historians have traced back to ancient Egypt. It reached strange extremes in eighteenth-century France, where the notorious Marquis de Sade wrote of an unsavoury dinner ... at which the guests sat on seats formed by live slaves. Less sadistic Frenchmen meanwhile delighted in human shapes on the legs of their Empire furniture.'

'Furniture features throughout Magritte's work. There are white chairs in flames ... and a table with a burning candle acting as a highly destabilising leg ...'

The book's major contribution without a doubt is that it offers all paintings as a wonderful source of design plunder!

One wonders what Streeton, Dobell, Rees and Whiteley have in store for us.

Leon Sadubin. Leon is a well-known furnituremaker in N.S.W.



The Craft of Bookbinding Eric Burdett. 1975. David & Charles. (Third Impression 1983.) 400pp over 100 diagrams, photographs. \$50.95

The book has been divided into eight chapters that follow a logical sequence with the last chapter devoted to materials, glossary, sources of supply, bibliography, acknowledgements and index.

Eric Burdett has all the qualifications to produce a practical handbook on the subject, having been a double silver medallist in the City and Guilds of London Institute, a lecturer on the subject at Southampton and Bournemouth Colleges of Art. He was also a member of the City and Guilds Advisory Committee and for a number of years a Chief Examiner in Advanced Bookbinding.

To produce a practical handbook on a craft activity with such a long historical development and the variety of techniques and operations that can be used, poses the dilemma of what techniques and operations should be covered and to what extent. Over a number of years many people have tried with varying degrees of success. Eric Burdett, I am happy to say, has succeeded with a well-presented book that covers basic information for the amateur and enough technique and comment to arouse the interest of the professional. To understand some of the advanced techniques however, the amateur would need to have had a reasonable exposure to craft binding. Ideally the book can be used to advantage as a reference text for students who are looking to bookbinding as a vocation.

A lot of people, and I am included in this group, find it difficult to follow a manual 'how to do it' instruction from a written text. Most of the instructions together with the illustrations in this book are easy to interpret and follow.

One of the valuable contributions presented in the book is contained in the last chapter, a more than adequate list of material suppliers and their location. Materials and craft equipment have always been a problem in this isolated part of the world, and although there has been considerable improvement recently, there are still occasions where an overseas inquiry is necessary.

In summary, with the increasing interest being generated in binding as a creative craft activity, Eric Burdett has provided a timely practical reference handbook that is worthy to be included in any interested amateur or professional's library. As a bonus, although it should be expected from this publication, the book is tastefully bound.

Keith Turnell. Keith is Head Teacher, Binding and Finishing, TAFE, Sydney.

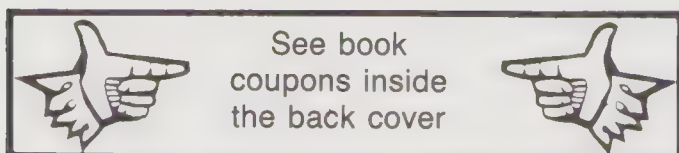


Spinning for Softness and Speed. Paula Simmons. Madrona, 1982. 71 pages, 20 page Appendix of Tips and Reminders, black and white illustrations. \$US 7.95.

Paula Simmons has written several books on textile crafts. She is probably best known in Australia for her 1977 book, *Spinning and Weaving with Wool*. This text is now a well-used reference among those spinners who have more than a casual interest in the kind of yarn they produce.

While there is always some caution necessary in applying American text to Australian conditions, Paula Simmons' long experience in working with wool, and with teaching at workshops, has made her very aware of the difficulties, and of the differences in spinners' skills.

Spinning styles are individual. Many spinners (and some authors), tend to prefer and to promote methods which are compatible with their own style. This hardly leads to versatility. In this book as in her earlier book, Paula Simmons shows her awareness of the value of teaching different methods,



both as a learning experience and as a means of controlling the properties of handspun yarn. This book is a description of one of these methods. It includes advice on the washing and preparation of fleece, discussion of suitable wheels, as well as instruction in the necessary spinning techniques. There is a chapter on projects made from the soft, low-twist yarn made by this method.

While it may be possible to learn to spin from this book, it would be of more value to someone who is not a beginner, but who is trying to improve and diversify the yarns they spin and to understand why one spinning wheel differs from another. Incidentally, if you are inclined to flinch at the mention of 'drive ratios', you may take heart at Paula's contention that she is easily confused on this subject!

No book descriptive of a craft can be a substitute for the experience of practising it; but a reader with limited knowledge of fleece types may find a little difficulty in choosing the most suitable fleece for this method. Some more complete identification of

fibre diameter and fleece lengths would have been helpful. In Australia we have a far greater range of fleece of all descriptions than is available in America, so some experimentation would be necessary.

Essentially this book is a guide to a method of spinning a softer yarn. For most people, the fact that it is also a faster method may not be so important. No-one intends to challenge the Industrial Revolution on a treadle-driven spinning wheel. Speed of production is very relevant however and necessary to anyone who sells handspun yarn or the fabric and garments made from it. A thorough consideration and exploration of the techniques described must benefit both production spinners and those of more relaxed ambitions.

Jess Begg. Jess has been teaching spinning for 20 years and lives in McKinnon, Victoria.



Stitches Patterns and Projects for Knitting. Stitches Patterns and Projects for Crochet. Wanda Bonando. Macdonald Futura Australia, 1984. Approximately 280 pages, full colour illustrations, black and white diagrams. \$13.50 soft cover \$26.95 hard cover.

These books deal with basic stitch making, a variety of stitches and basic and advanced patterns.

The author has included some interesting research into the history of both knitting and crochet, both of which date back to more than 1000 BC. Knitting originated with the Egyptians and later the Scandinavians. It is believed that the Israelites brought the skill of crocheting with them when they fled from Egypt, using camel hair and sheep wool, spun and worked in simple stitches during the long trek across the Sinai desert.

The sections dealing with basic stitches in both books are very explicit and easy to follow for the beginner and are clearly illustrated.

There is a large variety of stitches given, ranging from simple to intricate, making a very useful reference book for garment design.

Apart from the basic instructions, the crochet book is more suited to the experienced craftsperson. It includes a variety of intricate medallions, table mats and bedspreads, and there are some simple projects; belts, pot holders, toys and cushions. As well as patterns for basic garments, the knitting book includes children's wear, toys, household articles and several beautiful table centres.

Although the patterns are very basic, we consider that it is beyond the average beginner to work out sizing and number of stitches for a personalised garment.

The books are good for basic knitting and crocheting, but do not flow in an orderly and constructive manner from stitch construction to the finished project.

Hints on shaping, borders and trimmings are well illustrated and form a necessary part of a well finished article, with step by step diagrams.

Mary Rennoldson and Maureen Masters. Mary and Maureen are the proprietors of The Wool Factory in Hahndorf, South Australia.



Patchwork. Helen Fairfield. Octopus Books, 1980. 80 pages. \$6.95.

Hexagons and diamonds, log cabin, clamshell and cathedral window, these are just a few of the traditional designs included in this exciting new book on patchwork for beginners. You will find all the information you need to make a full size quilt but Helen's emphasis is mostly on the construction of twenty attractive small projects such as tea cosies, purses, bags, cushion covers, doll quilts, wall hangings and many more.

Both the American and English methods for piecing patchwork are clearly described in this book and Helen takes the reader through each technique. She describes patchwork as the art of making mosaic patterns by cutting and sewing together scraps of materials of different colours and explains the two kinds of basic patchwork, pieced work and patched or applied work.

The book is attractively presented and is covered with a photograph of a pieced quilt done in those irresistible Liberty prints. It contains many coloured prints of historic quilts as well as contemporary quilts and small projects. There are also artist's sketches to illustrate the techniques for construction.

The introduction on the history of quilting is lengthy but informative and well worth reading. She briefly covers information on materials and equipment necessary for patchwork but it is not totally up to date as there are many other supplies available on the market today for the



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John Sainsbury. Author of:

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Planecraft
Woodturning Projects for Dining
Woodworking Projects with Power Tools
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patchwork artist. Her section on design presents some good ideas but the beginner may find the information incomplete for undertaking the exercise of designing a piece of work.

The more experienced patchwork artist will find that this book does not offer any new or innovative challenges but it is highly recommended for the beginner and also for the teacher of patchwork classes who may want some simple ideas for small projects.

Rachel Dettman. Rachel is from Norwood, SA, and is an experienced quiltmaker, teacher and lecturer.

MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE
ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS
IN AUSTRALIAN COLLECTIONS



Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts in Australian Collections.

Margaret M. Manion and Vera F. Vines. Thames and Hudson. 1984. \$60.00. 48 colour plates. 240 pp.

This is the first comprehensive survey of medieval manuscript illumination in Australian collections.

Professor Margaret Manion, Ph.D. and Ms Vera Vines, Ph.D. carried out their research from their base at the University of Melbourne where they both specialise in medieval art.

Their survey reveals that the state libraries, art galleries and universities are repositories for a wide range of early manuscripts. The book begins with a short essay by Ms Vines on those Australian collectors who enriched their nation with a great artistic legacy.

It is impossible to read Ms Vines' essay on David Mitchell (1836-1907) who endowed the Mitchell Library or Col. Richard Couch (1868-?) who gave thirteen medieval manuscripts to the Ballarat Fine Arts Gallery without reflecting on our contemporary crop of millionaires. They seem content with a patronage of ephemeral sports events and yellow journalism. Never have so many done so little.

Illuminated manuscripts are reflections of patronage too. These beautiful books were most often commissioned by individuals or institutions (monasteries or cathedrals) from artists' studios.

Manion and Vines have compiled very erudite notes that attempt to trace the style and provenance of each manuscript they located. This often tells us a great deal about the commissioning of these works. For example, a Latin **Pontifical** (a book of ceremonies and blessings for use by a bishop) from the State Library of Victoria was commissioned by Philippe de Levis (1466-1537) who was a French bishop in 1497. An Italian History of the Roman 'Emperors' (c.1479) also in Victoria was commissioned by the Florentine Medici family, probably Lorenzo the Magnificent. Naturally, the Medici enjoyed the association of their family name with those of the Roman leaders.

The notes and commentary are scholarly and this book is not intended for the general reader.

There are however, black and white as well as colour photographs of many of the works surveyed which make the book a valuable resource for any owner. Certainly, it is a necessary work for an Australian library reference shelf.

Michael Bogle

A Dictionary Of Dyes And Dyeing by K.G. Ponting.

Mills and Boon. 1980 hardcover \$29.50 207pp. 8pp black and white plates.

The late author of this book is clearly a most interesting man. For many years he ran a family-owned woollen textile factory and specialised in managing its dyehouse. As a result he developed an interest in dyeing and its history, and intends this book for both those with similar interests, and those who make their own textiles. He states that he has 'tried to answer the kind of questions people interested in this subject might ask'. The bibliography is impressive and would be extremely useful for anyone studying dye history, as would the inclusion of a complete list of **Ciba Review** articles on dyeing and a detailed time chart of dye history from 1856 to 1956.

The book is clearly laid out in alphabetical order with simple explanations of the various items and some very good information on natural dyes from an historical viewpoint. I liked the listings under colours: red dyes, green dyes and soon.

The historical material on indigo and madder is good as far as it goes, but unfortunately there is no mention of the Asian use of any of the dyes whatsoever. This may appear on the surface to be a minor oversight until you consider the enormous historical and artistic significance of the use of indigo in Japan, not to mention China or South East Asia. It is hard to believe that such a huge field could be neglected until you realise that we are dealing with an essentially regional British writer, with perhaps little access to material on Asia. This would seem to be the case when you look at the bibliography, which consists largely of European texts, only one or two of these published within the past two decades.

There are other omissions too, which lessen the book's usefulness to contemporary textile artists. There is a wealth of material on ancient dyestuffs but very little on the most-

used dyes of today — azoic, fibre reactive, soluble vat, not to mention the enormous commercial application of disperse dyes in the printing of synthetic fabrics, a subject which Mr Ponting dismisses in one or two lines.

The author has an industrial background, which is reflected in his choice of entries, and his explanation of terms. Some things are not explained clearly enough for people with no dyeing experience. The omission of any information on the identification of fibres, for instance, is only one indication that this book can hardly be used as a comprehensive source for beginners in dyeing.

On the credit side, however, it is still an interesting and useful book providing you realise that it does not actually achieve the purpose for which it was intended. It is perhaps of more interest to weavers than to surface designers, and is certainly not what I would call the definitive dictionary on dyeing. That, I think, still needs to be written, and by a writer with an art fibre background, not someone from industry. As it stands, this dictionary is the only one we have, other than the huge and

DYEMAKING WITH EUCALYPTS

Jean K. Carman

Jean Carman presents the results of the extensive research she has carried out into the use of Australian eucalypts for making dyes. Since 1980 she has been using eucalypt dyes for dyeing fibres other than wool and using them in other techniques—painting, screen printing, tie-dyeing. She gives comprehensive lists of suitable eucalypts that grow in each State and in Papua New Guinea. Data include the location of each species, the mordant used, and the dye colour obtained from some 300 species. In an interesting introductory section Jean Carman reviews the history of dyemaking, and she gives useful information on her method of treating wool, making dyes from leaves, bark, and wood, and how the use of different mordants can affect the dye colour obtained.

As well as giving clear directions for following the traditional methods for using mordants and dyeing, directions that can not only be used for eucalypts but for other plants, this book offers the reader a challenge to try new crafts and develop a greater awareness of colour and creativity.

Many full-colour photographs enhance this handy reference book for both the serious researcher and the interested amateur.

Paperback

\$12.95 plus postage \$2.00

Kangaroo Press
PO Box 75 Kenthurst 2154

extremely expensive **Encyclopaedia of Textiles**, and therefore it wins by default. If you have some money to spare it is quite a worthwhile addition to your library.

Inga Hunter: Inga is a practising fibre artist, and lecturer in fibre at the City Art Institute, Sydney.



Quilting: An Introduction to American Patchwork Design. Penny Morris, B.B.C. 1984. 72 pages, 29 black and white photographs, 103 line drawings. \$9.95.

This book is a British version of one published in conjunction with a television series on patchwork and quilting shown in America. The series was subsequently screened on British television beginning in Spring 1984, and a revised edition of the book was released for British quilters using British terms.

The book sets out on the huge task of providing instruction on drawing up a quilt block, colour and design, many designs for patchwork and applique, including group-made quilts, Amish quilts, strip quilts, log cabin quilts and star quilts. Penny Morris then continues by providing advice on buying a quilt, and contemporary quiltmakers and their work.

The scope of subjects covered in the book is such that the beginner would require further instruction in order to make a quilt from the directions in the book, Australian readers not having the benefit of being able to use the television series with the book. The written instructions are, however, reasonably clear and are supplemented with figures illustrating some of the steps involved. Quiltmakers who already have an introduction to the craft will find the same instructions a useful refresher on the techniques and much other information to add to their knowledge. Answers to questions often asked by quiltmakers are sought by Penny Morris from people in the relevant fields, from specialists in Ohio Amish

quilts to organisers of group-made quilts.

At the end of each chapter there is a list of quilts in the TV series. This list supplies the name of the quilt and quiltmaker for each of the quilts seen in the television series, and is, therefore, of little use to the Australian reader who has not seen the television series.

The bibliography is quite comprehensive. Most of the books listed are the major references for quiltmakers' studies. These books are those to which most beginners are likely to turn for assistance. Other books listed provide the source for the more specific information given in the book.

There are extensive details given at the end of the book concerning addresses of suppliers of patchwork and quilting requirements, courses, museums and the Guilds concerned with quilting, however they all apply to Great Britain and Ireland. This information is also of restricted interest to Australian readers.

There are now so many books available on quilting that the quiltmaker must stop and evaluate the personal relevance of a new book prior to its purchase. With this in mind, I would suggest that while the book will provide some worthwhile information to the quiltmaker, other information contained therein duplicated in any number of books on quilting.

Alison Snapp. Alison is a freelance embroiderer who teaches embroidery, patchwork and quilting with the Embroiderers' Guild of NSW.



China's Crafts

Roberta Helmer Stalberg and Ruth Nesi-Eurasia Press, 1983 (1980) 200 pages, 8 colour plates, 150 black and white photographs, \$18.95

It is frequently asserted that crafts in China are artisan/factory-based, whereas in Australia craftpersons are

supposedly dedicated to the pursuit of self-expression, innovation and experimentation. However, I believe this is too sweeping a distinction since it underrates, for one thing, the role of the Chinese research institutes to initiate, develop and evolve specific craft forms, including the use of different materials, technologies and associated skills.

This said, there is no doubt traditionalism, or 'archaism' as it is sometimes referred to, is and always has been a paramount feature of Chinese art inasmuch as a love of the antique has ensured the survival of decorative codes over long periods, allowing the symbols to be revived and re-interpreted with contemporary meaning.

The authors of this brief guide, one of whom is a lecturer in Chinese art and holds a PhD in Chinese language and literature, remark on these aspects of Chinese crafts, commenting on the great antiquity of the art forms, their astonishing variety and beauty, the skill of China's craftpersons and how all these elements combine to make for absorbing and rewarding study.

The authors' aim is to provide 'a broad yet handy guide to the crafts in China today' (i.e. the late 1970s). Obviously, so topical and wide-ranging a subject as this is bound to suffer from certain inherent difficulties, namely, out-of-date details and cursory treatment of complex themes and processes.

Part (1) of the book discusses the background and heritage of Chinese crafts and the wealth of their symbolism. Part (2) describes particular craft forms, their technical and material features. This latter section in itself divided into 6 parts, as follows: pottery and porcelain; jade and ivory; silk weaving and embroidery; lacquerware; cloisonne and metalwork; and folk arts.

A shopping guide completes the book, with information on pre-1980 craft production and retail outlets in China. As a consumer guide this paperback therefore has extremely limited application, something the authors readily concede.

If readers are seeking an exhaustive analysis of Chinese crafts, their history, symbolism, materials and



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Quilting Techniques and Patterns for Machine Stitching by Maggie Malone

Today's busy quilter simply doesn't have the time to do the intricate close quilting of yesterday. But using modern methods and materials, here is your chance to turn out the sort of quilt your great-grandmother might have made, in something like one-tenth the time!

The author has turned to the most neglected part of the quilting process the quilting itself.

There are patterns that can be adapted to almost every purpose you might wish for quilting: bed coverings and wall hangings; of course, but also such things as a quilted pocket or skirt, slip coverings, place mats, curtains — the list is as large as your imagination.

Also by Maggie Malone
1001 Patchwork Designs

120 Patterns for Traditional Patchwork Quilts
115 Classic American Patchwork Quilt Patterns
Heirloom Quilts you can make

Available through good bookshops

techniques, this paperback will not satisfy them. Nevertheless, the authors have placed short bibliographies at the end of each chapter, allowing readers to pursue their research interests should they wish to do so.

To conclude, this book offers a very basic guide for tourists and laypersons intending to visit China and who want a concise but general precis of the subject. Equally, **China's Crafts** could be used profitably in schools at the middle to upper secondary level.

William Fleming. William studies Asian Studies at the ANU. He is a project officer with the South Australian Department for the arts.



Knitting. Octopus Books, 1984. 20 pages, 28 colour plates. \$8.95.

This attractive hardcover book will be helpful, and will appeal to beginners and the more experienced, and is issued at a time when this ancient craft is experiencing something of a revival.

Most knitters have learned the basic stitches during childhood but there is more to be absorbed in more advanced techniques and method to make this craft more pleasurable, involving, and creative.

The first chapter gives a short history to whet the appetite and continues with clear diagrams and instructions.

People who enjoy working from graphs will be interested in the seven pages of knitted samples that give symbols to interpret the stitches. Unusual for Australians but useful for knitters who wish to design and construct garments in a professional way.

There are over 20 projects photographed in colour with detailed simplified instructions, measurements and diagrams. Attractive wearable items of clothing for the whole family. Animal motif dresses for little girls which are displayed as

the front cover, picture cushions, a bed-spread and more.

It will be necessary for the reader to be guided by described yarn types and tensions in order to make these fashionable and attractive items from Australian yarns.



Crochet. Octopus Books, 1980. James Walters, Sylvia Cosh and others. 80 pages, 21 colour plates. \$6.95.

Much the same format is offered in this book for beginners and crochet workers who would like to gain more knowledge of this ancient craft. The 'History of Crochet' is condensed to two pages, and then follows many clear diagrams and concise instructions of basic stitches, shaping techniques and ways with yarn. Methods to give a professional finish to rows and rounds, tubes, spiral trims, Tunisian and hairpin lace crochet.

This hardcover informative book was published originally for the British and United States reader, the stitches are shown in symbols and words, the American terms and patterns are also given in brackets throughout.

More than 20 garments and decorating projects may be created from the detailed instructions which are easy to follow. The traditional type items seem to be the most successful of these. A handsome bedspread decorated with baskets of flowers, a beautiful filet crochet curtain, towel trims, and a classic jacket are included. This book was originally published in 1980 and the other garments seem to reflect this era. A contribution by 12 year old Amanda Cosh who creates unusual crochet fungi from scraps of yarn is of special interest. Amanda's mushrooms are photographed in colour with easy instructions.

AUSSIE FAIR



Aussie Fair. Liz Gemmell. Lloyd O'Neil, May 1984. 72 pages, 25 colour plates. Large paper back \$5.95.

Liz Gemmell has concentrated on Fair Isle and picture knitting in this colourful new book aimed at the hand and machine knitter.

The print, graphs, diagrams and instructions are particularly clear and easy to follow.

As the title suggests, the 16 garments designed for the whole family are Proudly Australian. All states and territories are represented as animals, birds, Ayers Rock and the Opera House can be found in great profusion and colour.

The garments are photographed flat on plain backgrounds so there is nothing to detract from the detailed motifs. If the reader feels they would be too eye-catching, not to worry, Liz

Gemmell has included a chapter on adapting the designs to be placed differently and selectively to suit all tastes.

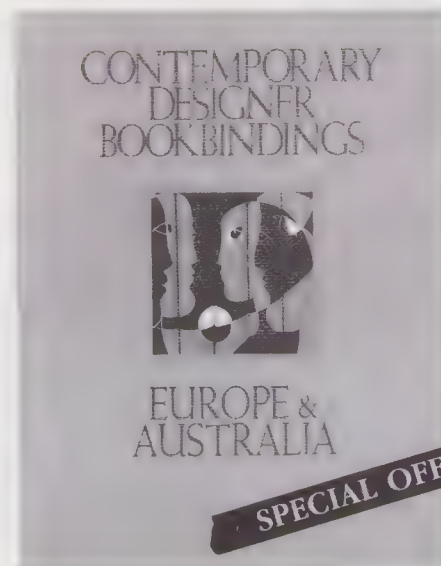
Following the success of Liz Gemmell's earlier books *Woolley Jumpers* and *Jolly Jumpers*, *Aussie Fair* should be a winner.

Betty Shaw. Betty from Mt. Waverley, Victoria, is a Crafts Consultant and Editorial Co-ordinator for Coats Patons (Australia) Ltd.

A New Look for Needlework Ondorisha Publishers 112 pages \$14.95

This book contains 112 pages of information on the embroidering and the making of over 40 objects for every aspect in the home.

The instructions, diagrams and working graphs are collated at the back of the book and are clearly illustrated and easy to follow. The stitch directions are easily understood by students, however, I would like to have seen more instruction on stitch technique which is easily forgotten even by the more experienced needleworker. A working diagram of cross stitch is essential in a



Contemporary Designer Bookbinding

This is the first nation-wide survey of Australian designer bookbindings ever assembled. The colour catalogue also includes new European bookbinding brought to Australia especially for exhibition.

This full colour designer award-winning publication is available to Craft Australia subscribers for only \$5.50 (including postage). Please order by using the coupon at the back of the magazine.

[Shops and galleries interested in wholesale of this catalogue, please contact the magazine.]



book such as this to enthuse the inexperienced. Clear instructions are given on mitred corners and hems.

For the more ambitious there are large projects such as tablecloths, bedspreads, cushions, table runners and wall hangings. For the worker with less time to spare there are many small articles to make for family or friends. These consist of various cosmetic holders, tote bags, T-shirts and aprons. Even the bathroom has not been forgotten, and I am sure there will be many who will appreciate the teapot and toaster cover for the breakfast table.

It is a collective book of embroiderers without a particular author or bibliography containing 29 coloured plates. There is not a comparable book available on the market at the present time and it fulfils a gap between the cheaper Craft Magazines and the more expensive embroidery books. For the followers of 'Ondori' books this will be a good addition to add to their collection, but the appeal to the serious embroiderer is limited.

'Rusty' Walkley. 'Rusty' is a Tutor in Textiles, West Australian College of Advanced Education

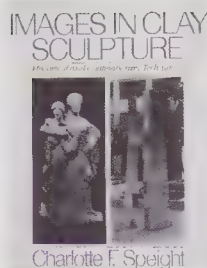
Images in Clay Sculpture, Historical and Contemporary Techniques. Charlotte F. Speight, Harper and Row, 1983. 216 pp.

Images in Clay Sculpture tells the story of how humans throughout history have taken one of the most common materials in the world, clay, and from it have created expressive images reflecting their hopes, their fears, their deepest feelings. It also explores how contemporary creators of clay sculpture feel about the material they use.

The starting point, Part One, Chapter 1, is the medium, the earth, mud, clay, and the intense love/hate relationship with the material that the author shares with other ceramic artists. 'I feel I am above all a man who loves a lump of clay' says the Italian Carlo Zauli.

The author conducts an almost exhaustive foray into the creative uses of the material, selecting and re-ordering art history to isolate examples of clay sculpture: from the first recorded Ice Age clay figure, the Venus of Dolni Vestonice, to Emperor Yin's Entombed Warriors, Nok heads from Nigeria, Sepik River icons, masterpieces of the Ancient World, Islam, Asia, as well as a comprehensive range of contemporary European, American and one Australian clay sculptor.

The book is structured in two parts: 'Methods and Techniques' and 'Images and Ideas in Clay', echoing the uneasy separation between 'idea' and 'technique' which has bedevilled the art/craft debate for centuries. It is concerned exclusively with non-utilitarian works, 'art values' rather than 'pet values'.



There are positive and negative aspects to Speight's approach. On the positive side: she knows her material and paints a broad canvas (excuse the metaphor, potters). The great feature of the book is the concentration on actual works, all extremely well documented with provenance: artist, location, title, date, dimensions, technical details as well as inside information on construction and relevant comments by the maker.

The book has a distinctly documentary style, with over 300 photographs; 15 colour plates and the rest marginal quality black and white. Speight's consistently intelligent, if pragmatic, commentary on works is supplemented by a good glossary of terms, bibliography and index.

The nagging negative aspect to Speight's approach is her obsessive concentration on the material and methods of fabrication as the references for reading works. We have become accustomed to an insular medium-based classification of the arts, reinforced by art colleges, curators, collections and especially by the peer-group fraternities of those working in the medium.

The reality is that the medium does set up disciplines — technical, aesthetic and institutional. Ostensibly technical decisions — choice of material and process —

involve critical aesthetic judgements as much as decisions on form, image, idea. They cannot be separated in the creative process. Moreover, technical issues are as integral to critical discourse in painting and sculpture as in the 'crafts'. In any medium or discipline a set of historical, formal and technical considerations become parameters for theoretical dialogue. Speight has made a great contribution to the parameters of critical dialogue in ceramics, and indirectly, in sculpture.

Dr. Peter Emmett is the former director of the Crafts Centre Gallery, Crafts Centre, NSW.

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Quality 5, South Australia

Ruth Trenerry

Positioned in the heart of Adelaide on the corner of a busy arcade is the city's newest craft shop. City shoppers are greeted by a complete glass exterior that hides none of the quality hand-crafted merchandise inside. This craft shop, *Quality 5* is the completely urban offspring of five established suburban South Australian craft galleries: *Aldgate Crafts*, *Eastwood Crafts Gallery*, *Elmswood Fine Crafts*, *Springton Gallery* and *Studio 20*.

Quality 5's origins are recent. When Malcolm Cole and Jo Trevelion-Cole, owners of suburban Elmswood Fine Crafts Gallery called a meeting of craft retailers in 1984 to discuss the Royal Adelaide Show Craft Exhibition, the now 'parents' of *Quality 5* subsequently worked together for the first time. The exhibition was a success. The gallery group was so encouraged and stimulated by this, the idea of a jointly-owned city craft shop was born.

To retail craft in the city, the owners of the five galleries, ten in all, formed a company, found a suitable city location and pooled their considerable expertise and energy to open 'Q5' as Jaki Eyre of *Studio 20*, affectionately calls the new baby. Despite their common foundation as craft retailers, individuals amongst the gallery-owning shareholders come from backgrounds which include architecture, building management and administration. This range of talents worked hard to outfit the new store. Working with a fully glassed exterior, the interior was fitted with bright carpet and with display boxes to take complete advantage of the shop space. This was set against a peaceful, accommodating wall colour.

As a company the owners of the five galleries found they could move into a high rent retail area which was formerly prohibitive. A whole new avenue of retailing was necessary. While staying in their separately owned 'earthy' craft galleries, craft retail for the shareholders of *Quality 5* had to become fast-moving and accessible to a large volume of foot traffic.

Quality 5's energetic manager and one of the shareholders, Jo Trevelion-Cole, told *Craft Australia* a completely new buying public comes into the shop to browse and to buy. 'Our competition' says Joe, 'is not the city or suburban craft outlets, but the nearby big stores which sell quality products made in factories overseas and in Australia'. In the first few months of business she has watched the same buyers progress from purchasing a finely crafted coffee mug to a quality decorative item. To have their products in a greater number of South Australian homes (not to mention what goes interstate and overseas) delights *Quality 5*'s ten shareholders.

The city store has found that people who did not have an awareness of craft are passing by, coming in to look more closely, and then making a purchase. They continue to come back too. 'The market for crafts is untouched', says Malcom, 'the product must be excellent and you must be there in the market place to sell'.

Behind all this are the craftspeople, at present 110 in all represented by Q5, whose work is now reaching a wider market. 'The craftspeople and the distributor are locked together. What is good for one is good for another', stresses Terry Eyre of *Studio 20*. Following the traditions of the five established shops, tags with the name of the artist appear on each item. Jo works hard to provide information about the piece and its maker to all potential buyers. *Quality 5* does not operate from the basis of passive selling.

To this end, each parent gallery carries material advertising the city shop. Information about their crafts is placed in the International Hotel and post cards depicting the range of crafts have gone to business offices. Newspaper and television advertising are possibilities which did not exist for individual owners before *Quality 5*. The advantage of combined strength is apparent.

Educating the non-craft buying public into the beauty and utility of their wares insures the success of this unique Australian craft retail venture. It also excites Q5's underlying belief that an awareness of handcrafted decorative and utility goods is an essential ingredient in a society where production-line goods predominate. *Quality 5*'s bold stand follows the best pioneering traditions.

Ruth Trenerry is an Adelaide freelance journalist.

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Ask Dr. Ben



I use polyester and epoxy resins in my work and have been told they are dangerous, especially to the eyes. What's the story?

M.T., Balmoral, NSW

Epoxy Resins

Epoxy resins are a group of substances widely used in reinforced plastics, chemical resistant coatings, adhesives and electrical and electronic components. They are usually prepared by mixing the epoxy component with a hardener or curing agent (a catalyst). These curing agents are responsible for most of the ill-effects associated with epoxies. Once they are completely cured, the resins present no hazard.

There are many different types of epoxy resins. Some are more hazardous than others. However, this article will discuss epoxies generally, as they all have similarities.

Health Effects:

The Skin

The most common adverse effect on health from epoxy resin is dermatitis. They are one of the commonest causes of industrial dermatitis. Something like 50 percent of people exposed to epoxies will develop dermatitis.

There are two types of effect on the skin:

1. **Primary Irritation.** This occurs on direct contact with the skin, and can occur after one exposure. This contact can come from the resin, the hardener or a mixture of the two. Fumes can also damage the skin.
2. **Skin sensitization** involves a quite different process to irritation. It is like an allergic reaction, so that after sensitization, even small exposures can cause a quite severe reaction. Even being present where epoxies are being used can cause a reaction.

Respiratory System

Inhalation of fumes or dusts can cause upper respiratory irritation, i.e. nose and throat. An asthma-like reaction may also occur.

Eyes

Splashes to the eye can cause damage to the cornea, which is the external layer over the coloured part of the eye. If not washed out immediately, permanent scarring can occur resulting in impaired vision.

Preventative Measures

1. **Ventilation.** As stated above fumes can cause dermatitis, as well as respiratory irritation. Epoxies should always be used in a well-ventilated place. Exhaust ventilation is preferable, but if this is not possible, it should be used outside. It should not be used in confined spaces.
2. **Avoiding Skin Contact.** Work with resins and hardeners should be done in such a way as to prevent the chemicals coming into contact with the skin or eyes. Mix resin and hardener in a disposable container. Use long handled rods for stirring to minimise accidental contact. Wear protective clothing. PVC gloves, overalls, aprons and goggles should always be used. Disposable cufflets covering the wrist and forearm may be useful. When working with large quantities, or where ventilation is inadequate an appropriate cartridge respirator should be worn.
3. **Avoiding Eye Damage.** Eye damage can be serious and permanent. The wearing of goggles is essential. If the eye is splashed with epoxies, it should be immediately washed out. A solution of 0.85 percent common salt and 0.5 percent Boric Acid should then be used as an eye bath and medical assistance sought immediately.
4. **General Measures.** Smoking, eating or drinking should be avoided when working with epoxies. Hands should be thoroughly washed after use. Protective clothing should be kept clean. PVC gloves can be washed with acetone, but must be then washed again with soap and water. Splashes to skin should be washed immediately with soap and water, and then neutralised with 3 percent acetic acid.

Safer alternatives to epoxy resins should be used whenever possible.

Australian Ceramics Tour

Critical Reaction

‘What is ‘Australian’ about Australian artists?’ wondered Robert Taylor, a critic from **The Boston Globe**, in a review of the exhibition *Contemporary Australian Ceramics*. During the show’s North American tour, this question was posed over and over again.

Various attempts to answer the question were complicated by the fact that Americans’ vague notions about Australia are characterised largely by the outback, Aborigines, kangaroos, and other unfamiliar mammals. Relatively few Americans have visited this distant continent and most rely on Australian movies for information about the land. One reviewer writing in **The Washington Times** compared the exhibition to the movies, *Breaker Morant* and *Gallipoli*, noting that ‘Australian artists, too, have had to resolve the conflict between their ties to English traditions and the overpowering terrain of their own country’. She cited *Wash and War* by Olive Bishop as an example of the anti-authoritarianism portrayed in *Breaker Morant*. Other artists such as Milton Moon and John Dermer, she commented, may look toward English ceramic traditions for inspiration, but manage to enlarge the scale in ways that render their work more appropriately ‘Australian’.

The same reviewer described work by Marea Gazzard and Joan Campbell as ‘large boulder-like pieces so rough and earthy, they look like they were broken off from some outback outcropping’ and observed that ‘the brashness of the frontier spirit lingers in the best of the work’ presented in the exhibition.

Since the press release for the exhibition pointed out the absence of native traditions in Australian pottery, critics were quick to pounce on international influences. Jane Addams Allen, **The Washington Times**’ reviewer, observed the popularity of oriental design among Australian artists. She attributed this interest not only to the relative proximity of Asia, but also to the Japanese training of Bernard Leach, England’s most famous 20th-century potter. She found the Japanese influence overpowering, ‘producing too many lackluster pots with vaguely oriental shape and wishy-washy floral decoration. Two artists who seem to have absorbed the oriental influence without succumbing to cliché are Hiroe Swen, whose *Barrier Reef Sanctuary* is strikingly individual in shape and decoration and Sony Manning, who harks back to turn-of-the-century arts and crafts designs with her elegantly shaped and decorated slipcast porcelain vases’.

The profusion of international influences disturbed another critic. Pamela Kessler of **The Washington Post** wrote, ‘what’s missing from the show is Australia . . . the Australians have had to borrow, from the simply shaped vessels of Japanese *raku* to the whimsical experiments of American ceramics. A few pieces in the show even look Peruvian . . . There are only occasional hints of the continent down under, coincidentally, in three of the most appealing items in the show. Australian-looking birds have been etched in Alan Peascod’s stoneware forms, which he glazed with 24-carat gold lustre. Sony Manning inlaid a scene reminiscent of the outback in a porcelain vase. And pointing up the dichotomy of city and country life is Margaret Dodd’s *F.J. Holden Pretending to Be an Australian Native Porcupine*, in which a car sports a

long-nosed animal rug on its roof.’ Kessler concluded by saying, ‘An interesting and varied show, *Contemporary Australian Ceramics* lacks a distinctly national flavour. It’s contemporary but pretending to be Australian’. One wonders exactly how *bona fide* Australian artists would go about creating work that ‘pretended’ to be Australian.

Perhaps not surprisingly, North American critics did not agree about the success of the exhibition. **The Washington Times** suggested, ‘a more lively, less conventional show might have been chosen by someone more intimately involved with the craft [than was Kenneth Hood, deputy director of the National Gallery of Victoria]. It’s a good introduction to Australian ceramics, though, and if many of the pots seem notable only for their scale, the sculptural works by artists like Ms Gazzard, Mr Watt, and Mr Teschendorff alone are worth a visit.’

But Robert Taylor of **The Boston Globe** eventually responded to the question, ‘What is ‘Australian’ about Australian artists?’ by writing, ‘It’s hard to make generalisations about an emergent mode, but I’d say the element most distinctive is the tremendous vitality of the work, a characteristic shared with the younger Americans’.

Deborah Lerne Goodman is a contributing editor to the American magazine, *Fiberarts*.

West Australian Artist Wins Hoechst National Textile Award

A dynamic 25 year old West Australian artist, Douglas Wayne McManus, has won the 1984 Hoechst Textile Award.

Douglas, in his third and final year of a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking, will travel to Melbourne early in 1985 to take up the award at the Meat Market Craft Centre. Douglas has had considerable craft experience having participated in a number of exhibitions and was a joint recipient of the West Australian Young Artists Award in 1983.

Winning the Hoechst Textile Award will enable Douglas to make use of the superb screen-printing and print-making facilities at the Meat Market Craft Centre.

Sponsored by Hoechst Australia Limited in conjunction with the Meat Market Craft Centre, this National Textile Award is given annually to an artist/crafts-person working in the fields of batik, embroidery, screen-printed textiles and weaving. The award, to be taken up in Victoria, covers all workshop fees and free use of all workshop equipment for a period of one year at the Meat Market Craft Centre.

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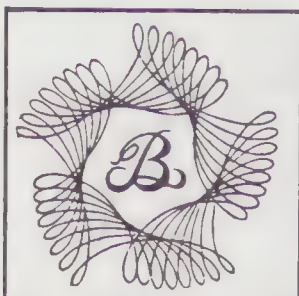
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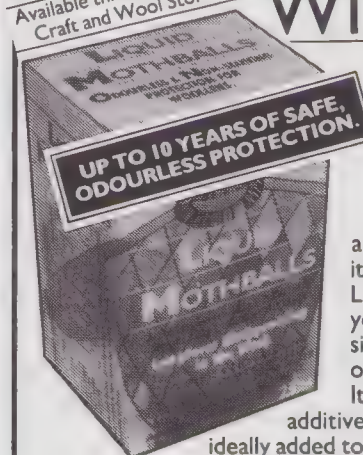
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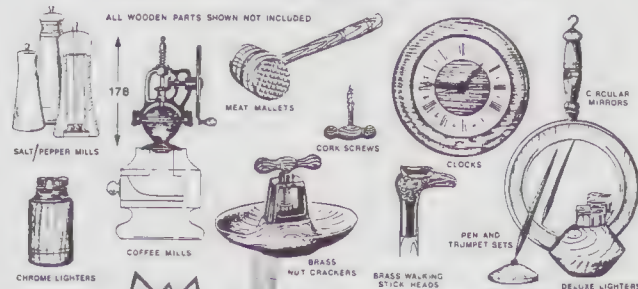
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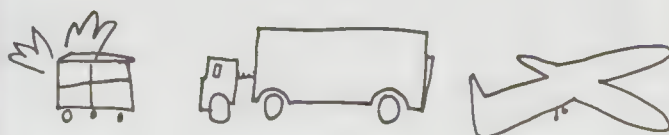
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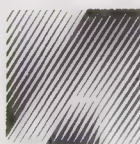
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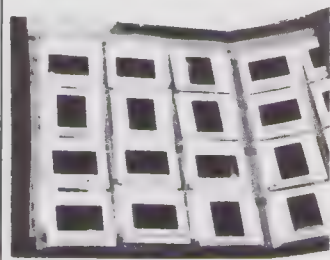
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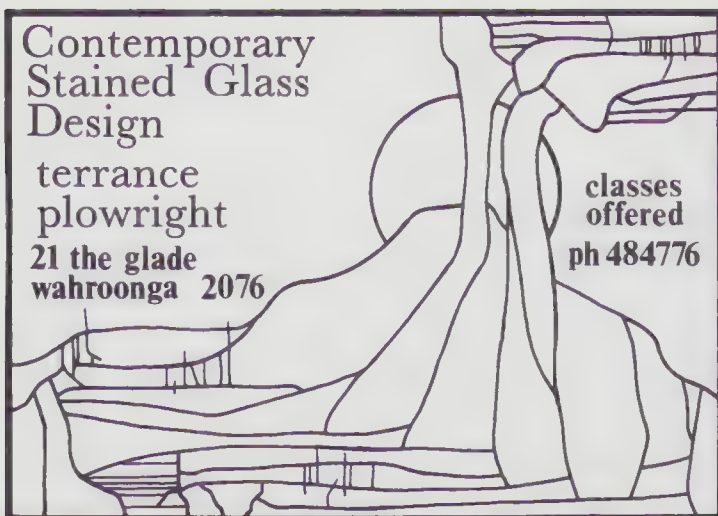
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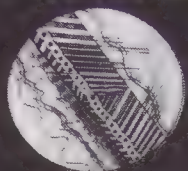
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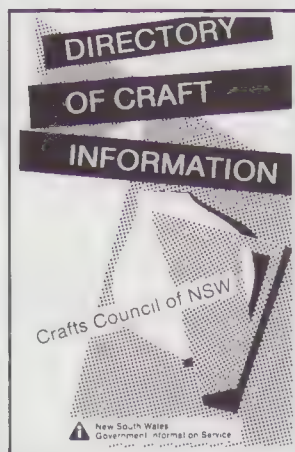


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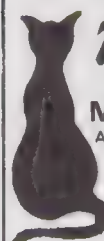
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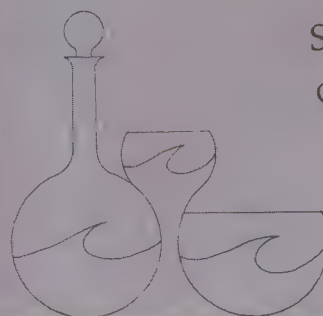
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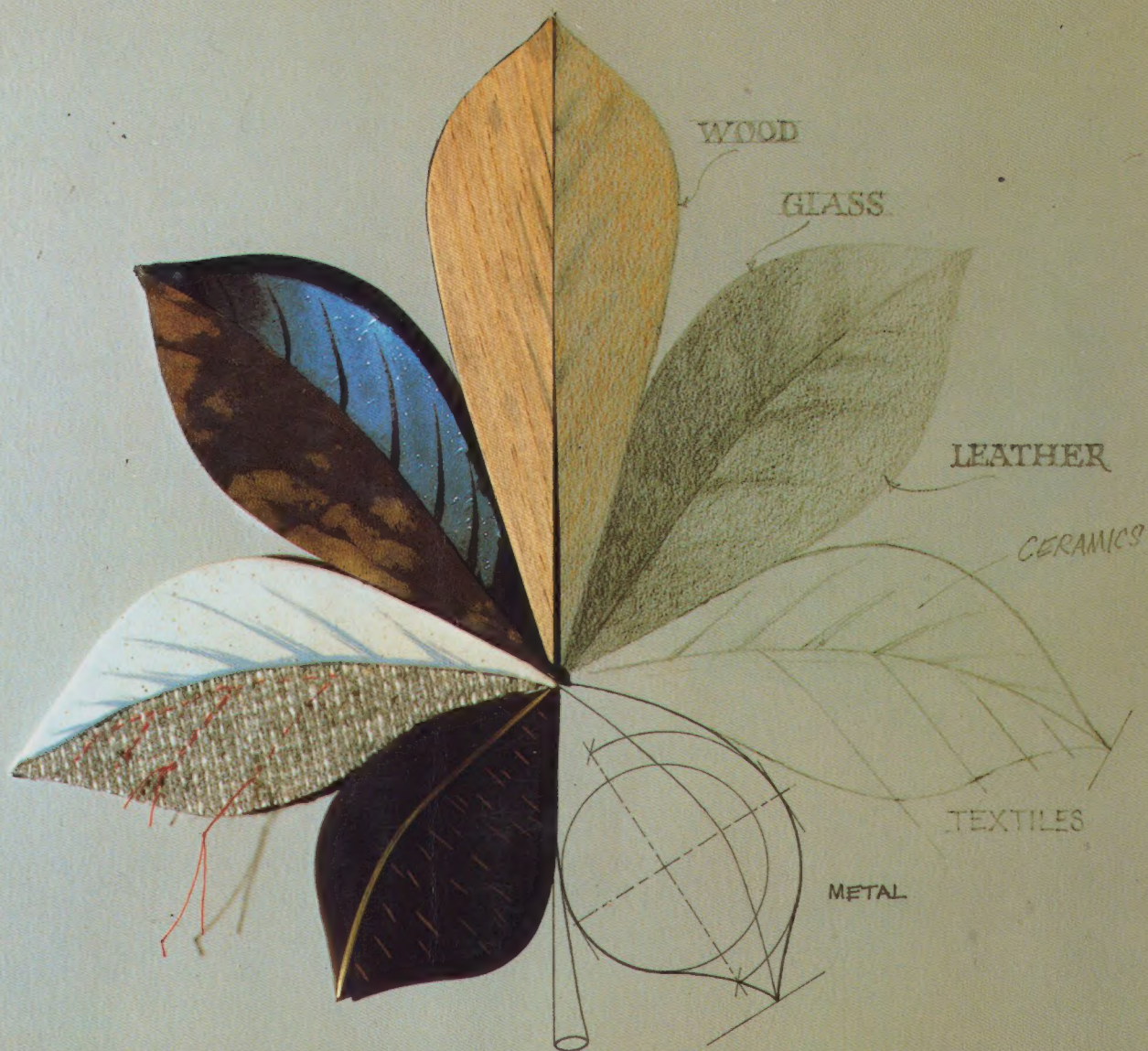
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